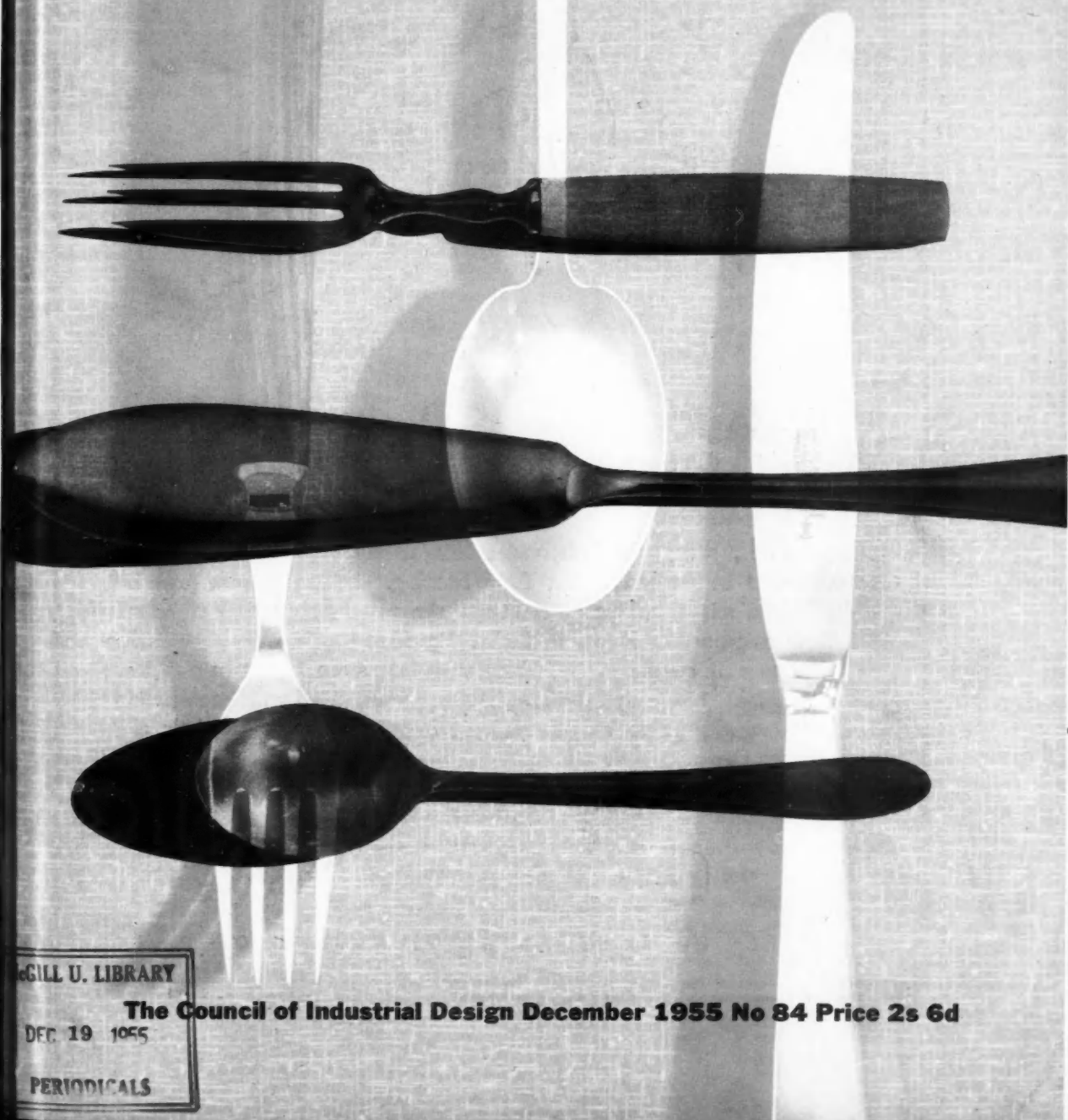


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Design



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PERIODICALS

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ORION, son of Hyrieus, was a hero of gigantic size and strength. He needed to be because, apart from hunting, civil engineering was his hobby and he raised, among other things, the vast harbour dam of Zancle and the promontory of Pelora in Sicily. Poseidon, the sea god, gave him the power to walk on the waters, which must have been a great help to him in these exploits. Nowadays, quite ordinary mortals, faced with problems of civil engineering, turn to aluminium and its alloys and, with their aid, outstrip even Orion.



THE

British Aluminium

CO LTD

NORFOLK HOUSE ST JAMES'S SQUARE LONDON SW1

NUMBER 84
DECEMBER 1955

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EDITOR: Michael Farr

EDITORIAL ADVISERS:
Sir Gordon Russell, Alister Maynard,
Paul Reilly, J. Noel White, Peter Hatch

ART EDITOR: Kenneth Garland

ASSISTANT EDITORS: John E. Blake,
Richard Rhodes

PRODUCTION: Aubrey Hewitt

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER: Dennis Hooker

BUSINESS MANAGER: Arthur Sudbery

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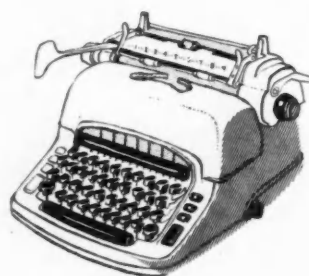
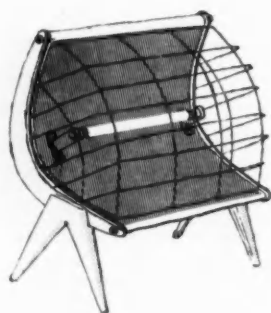
Design

Design before styles

CHRISTMAS inevitably conjures up open fires and candlelight; these symbols have roots running deep into the past but we continue to adapt them to our own times in several different ways. There are still the feudal few who burn great home-hewn logs upon their ancestral hearths while tallow candles gutter in the sconces against the panelled walls; others counterfeit this ancient style by radiating heat beneath logs of painted gauze and feign candlelight by a botch of bent iron-work, electric bulbs and plaster grease. Yet another style which rises honestly from the first without falling into the deceits of the second accepts the open fire in its recent thrifty and efficient form, and for the feast itself supplements electric light with tapered candles in a modern setting. To the post-feudal majority we suggest that the last is more satisfactory because the basic thinking seems to be right.

In the recent past poor design and bad style in manufacture have been so general that the distinction between the two has become blurred. In its early efforts to improve the standard of industrial design the CoID accepted that only fundamental re-thinking would bring improvement; so it gave encouragement to those firms who tackled design problems in a radical way. The most promising developments were in a type of design which, by laying emphasis on materials and function, was able to exploit more objectively the potentialities of new techniques. This improved the general standard and at the same time established a new tradition.

Those firms who had done some serious re-thinking, adopted a design policy on which their production could be based for several years. But some who failed to analyse the situation thoroughly only saw in the new style an opportunity to give an inferior design a new look. Consequently there has been a marked increase in the number of goods dressed up in what is known as 'contemporary', although some are only poor imitations of the best designs produced today. It is up to the customer to sort them out, but next April The Design Centre will make the task much easier.





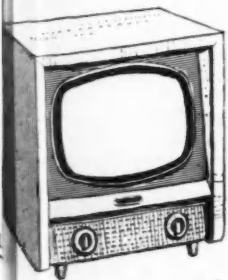
Buyers coming from all parts of the world will find well designed British goods displayed together in the permanent exhibition at The Design Centre, which opens next April. At 28 Haymarket, London, the Centre will present a constantly changing exhibition of durable consumer goods, picked by a

The Design Centre for world buyers

special committee of the CoID. Most of the space will be given to a general display of these selected products, but periodically small exhibitions are to be staged for particular sections of the public or particular trades; one of the first, which will open in midsummer 1956, will be of tableware - pottery, glass, cutlery, silverware and napery.

Full trade information will be given to each buyer, but no orders taken.

Visiting buyers will be put in touch with manufacturers, and the Council's industrial officers, with their special knowledge of industries, can be consulted. Also to assist in this way, 'Design Review' will be given a prominent position in the Centre, and its photographic and sample files will guide buyers to many thousands of British products of a similar standard of design to those on exhibition. Buyers, particularly from overseas, will be encouraged to make use of The Design Centre and its facilities in order to save time locating the latest well designed consumer goods from Britain.



Front end design

Photographs by Sam Lambert

DESIGNING THE FACADE of the modern motor car presents one of the most challenging problems to the automotive stylist. Basically an area must be filled between the bumper and the clearance points of the radiator and air cleaner, and include four holes for the lights, two of which will be circular to fit the standard sealed beam units. With the exception of the slightly oval aerodynamic shield over the lamps of the Porsche, this form has remained unchanged for years. If the car is to have a radiator front, there must be an opening to permit the passage of air. Passenger ventilation, openings for the horn sound waves and proper forward vision are also important.

Engineering problems aside, to 'begin' a car, the designers must make a statement of theme that will be followed in the rest of the body. The front end must not be too blunt; it must carry some suggestion of the speed, reliability and purpose of the car, for here is the focal point of the car's personality.

In these pictures taken of cars at the recent London 'Motor Show' five basic solutions are to be seen: (1) The vertical grille was established in the days of large vertical radiators and separate fenders - this form is used today for identification purposes or to give the car a massive classical feel; (2) The horizontal grille comes from the American trend to make the car appear lower and wider; (3) These vertical and horizontal forms are combined by some manufacturers as a concession to both appeals; (4) The oval follows the 1946 Farina designed Cistalia and 'Grand Prix' car appearance; (5) The sloped or plain front end is used for aerodynamic reasons, or to focus attention on rear engine drive.

Jaguar 2.4 retains the vertical form of the classical school in a fascinating composition of three ovals and six circles. Though cluttered, the arrangement of lights and ventilation openings gives this car an impressive frontal aspect.

Aston Martin's transitional vertical and horizontal grille is used for identification purposes. The flat surface under the lights is the only disturbing element in the well modelled design.

M G A has retained the impression of its easily recognised vertical grille but has squeezed it down to fit the new aerodynamic form. The wavy line forming the junction of mudguards and body forms also weakens the appearance.

Vauxhall Cresta uses the same basic theme as the new Standard 'Vanguard' - an oval crossed with a horizontal bar. However, the fight of minor verticals, heavy horizontals and endless excess chrome jewellery completely destroys the form.

Sunbeam Rapier spreads the grille 200 per cent wider than necessary so that outside vertical lines emphasise the forward slope of the fenders. The soft line of the grille makes this otherwise clean design rather undistinguished.

Continental Mk II from the American Ford Co uses a combination of parking lights and bumper, and an all perforated metal grille to add to the wide, low look. The bumper cross section is important in reducing the vertical area to be filled, while the arrow form of the car in plan view limits the 'boxy' look.

Desoto unifies both the air intake and light areas into an interesting whole. The fussiness in the curves around the parking lights detracts from this wide appearing grille.

Escort utilises the vertical theme in the area of the lights but constructs the horizontal grille in the modified oval shape. The similarity of form in the three areas helps to unify the front end.

Bristol modifies the oval opening with a lamp set inside. This weird aspect gives it a high identification value while the deep fillet at the sides of the grille allows excellent forward vision.

Porsche. The most honest expression of rear engine design. The only piercings in the front are for the horns and lights. This design is classically simple, aerodynamic and allows excellent vision forward.

Fiat 600, which is also rear engined, stands in contrast to the Porsche. To fill up the high hood area, the designer has used horizontal chrome bars to imitate front engine styles with a central spinner which conceals the horn.

Citroen, by bringing the bumper far forward of the lights, shows a clean sloping hood, that does not rely upon bars or screening to cover the air intake area. The body in general could be much improved, see pages 36-38.



Jaguar 2.4



Aston Martin



MGA



Vauxhall Cresta



Sunbeam Rapier



Continental Mk II



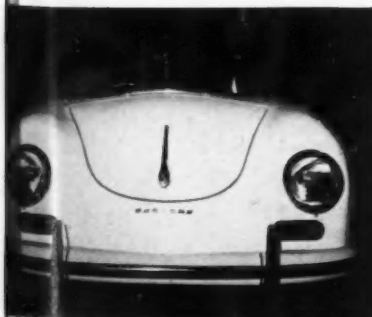
Desoto



Ford Escort



Bristol



Porsche



Fiat 600



Citroen

Fires and fireplaces

Alister Maynard



Stand designed by Wylie, Shanks and Wylie

To draw attention to some of the best designs of heating appliances on the market the Scottish Committee of the CoID decided to mount an exhibit called 'Heating the Home' at the 'Modern Homes' exhibition held during October in Glasgow. In this exhibit 18 examples of solid fuel, electric and gas appliances were shown with appropriate modern fireplace surrounds. A selection of the designs is illustrated in this article.

SOME OPTIMISTIC and perhaps wishful eyes look towards nuclear power to solve with more efficiency, less labour and in a comparatively short time our domestic heating problems. But no one knows how long it will be before this can be achieved, and in any case housewives, and their husbands too, are for the most part conservative people and will be unwilling to give up their traditional sitting room fire. In the meantime the efficiency of existing types of appliance has been increased, particularly among those using solid fuel. There has also been a noticeable improvement in the appearance of some appliances in recent years, although there are still many undistinguished and even clumsy examples on the market.

The difference in technical performance between one or another of the many solid fuel all-night burning fires which are now available often may not be very great. Any such differences that are apparent may well be due to the way in which the flue is built or the fire installed. In these circumstances personal choice will be influenced to a considerable extent by appearance and finish, and this will certainly be the case when the fire with its surround forms, as it normally does, the central feature of a room.

The old trouble of the high front to the continuous burning type of fire has been tackled by most manufacturers, and solved successfully in some cases by the provision of a detachable top for use at night. There is an increasing number of models now available in which the fret or front is simple and restrained with a welcome absence of those clumsy louvred or stepped effects which predominated for so long. The cream-cum-toffee coloured finish, plain or mottled, was not included among the appliances selected for this exhibition, but if you are not prepared to accept these so-called 'neutral' colours, it is often hard to get away from black.

The design of fireplaces presents other problems. Manufacturers of tiled fireplaces find it inconvenient to introduce wooden frames or mouldings, with the result that many fireplaces are left with a tiled edge. But there can be little doubt that wood provides a more suitable and sympathetic surround, which gains in effect by contrast with the tiled panel which it encloses. The all-tile surround always appears cold and unsympathetic even when it is not made to look clumsy and vulgar by the exertions of its creators in their search for novelty. Recently certain tile manufacturers have produced some new mouldings for surrounds which are fairly successful, but in the writer's view they start at a disadvantage in comparison with wood, stone or marble. All of these can be used in long lengths suitable to enclose and frame the main panel for which small units such as tiles are eminently suitable.

Little has been done so far to produce a suitable setting for new stoves like the Sofono 'Sunray' or the various types of free standing open fire which are coming on to the market.

The various forms of central heating were not covered in the exhibition under review, but some portable radiators and convectors were shown, as well as fixed panels, both electric and gas. There has, however, been little change for some time in the design of the majority of gas appliances for space heating.

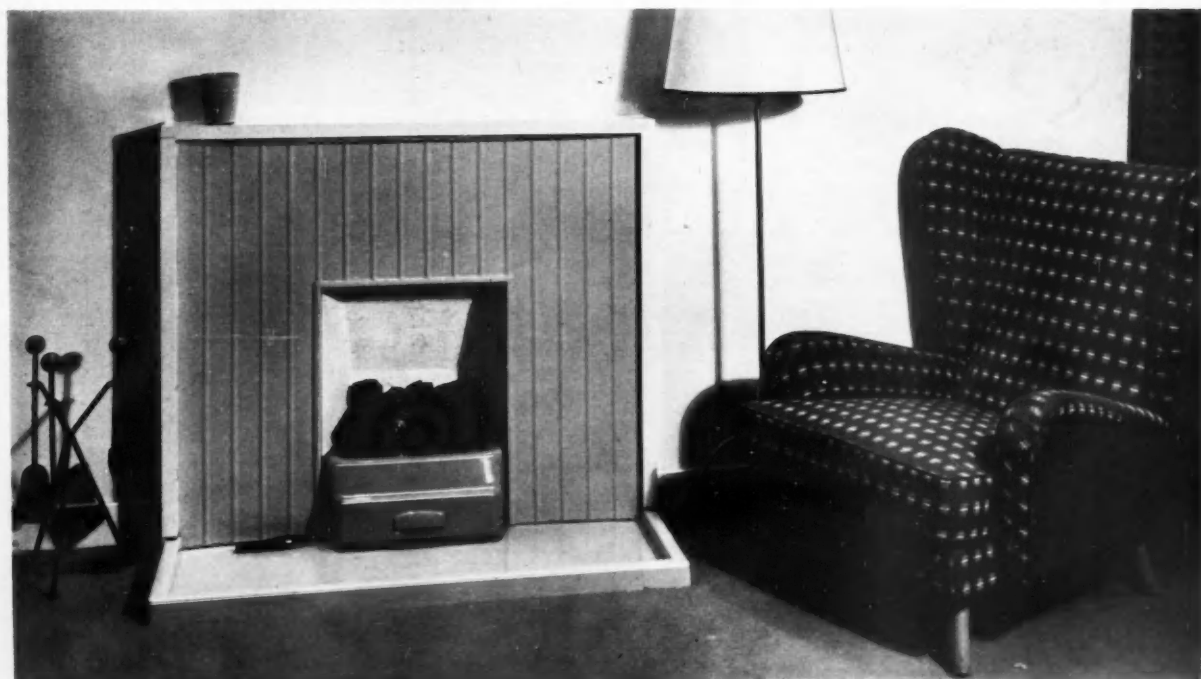
The fixed electric wall panel fire may appear to fall between two stools: it lacks the life and company of a coal fire and yet it is immobile. But it has a use and a market and its design is therefore a problem of importance. John Betjeman has crystallised the absurdity of the bogus electric flicker-fire in his line "Switch on the logs in the grate", but many who should know better still continue to give such nonsensical appliances prominence in places like boardrooms and the public rooms of luxury liners.

Such selective exhibitions as 'Heating the Home' are an important feature in the work of the Council and of the Scottish Committee, and they are perhaps of special value when a particular range of products is shown, each in a well considered setting. Few people have the gift of visualising, in their own homes, items which are displayed, as they so often are in the shops, in serried ranks. Here was a collection of technical appliances, some of which were complete in themselves while others were dependent for their final appearance on their settings. These settings were, therefore, an integral part of the exhibition.

In contrast to the majority of fireplaces at the 'Heating the Home' exhibit was the cast iron model supplied by Federated Foundries, with its 'Lo-Front' Sofono fire, 1. This combination, which is designed for mass production and is suitable for use in housing estates is, in its simplicity, a considerable advance on the general run of such cast iron fireplaces which still cling to the 'stepped' formation of the 'thirties and other outworn clichés. This particular fireplace gains also by the use of a plain, painted wood frame, a feature of many other fireplaces on the stand.

Allied Ironfounders' new 'Rayburn' fire, 2, page 16, made one of its first public appearances at the exhibition. The example chosen had an 'Alisheen' black

1 'Lo Front' Sofono fire and surround by Federated Foundries Ltd.



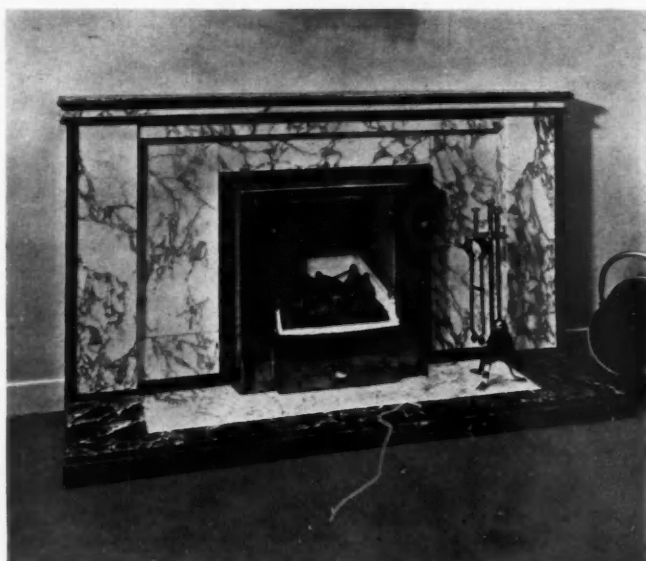
Fires and fireplaces

continued

finish, though it is one of the few fires that are produced in a range or good colours. The frame surrounding the fire opening encloses also a convector panel, which, besides providing an additional means of distributing heat, adds importance to the appearance of the fire itself. The marble surround to the 'Rayburn', made by Gibson & Goold of Glasgow, was a distinguished setting and showed how fine proportion, simple mouldings and good materials can provide a quality which rises above the self-conscious modern tags of 'contemporary' or 'traditional'.

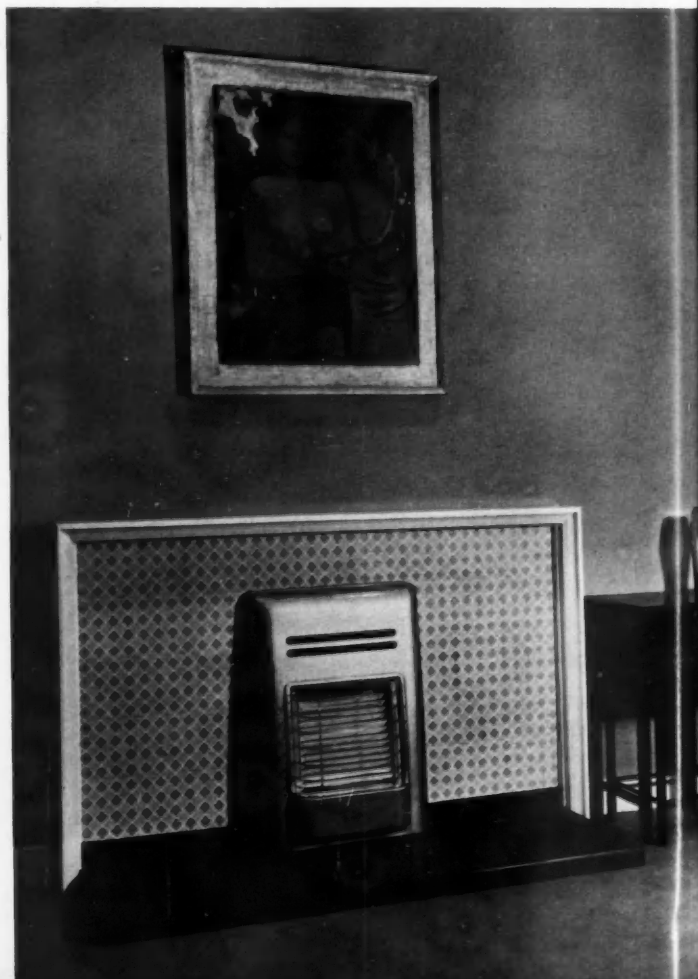
The R & A Main gas fire, in a surround by Forsythe Paton, 3, shows some new characteristics in this type of appliance and is simple and unpretentious without being austere.

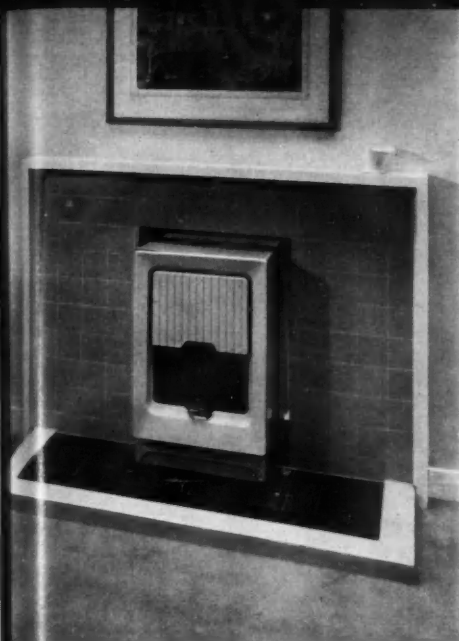
The design of solid fuel stoves seemed until a short time ago to have been dominated by characteristics apparently imposed by the process of casting, but new possibilities were high-lighted by the marketing about a year ago by Federated Foundries of the Sofono 'Sunray', 4, using very much lighter castings than are usual in this type of stove and introducing, at the same time, the fine-meshed screen in place of the traditional heavy doors. The changed character of this stove offers opportunities for new thought on the most suitable type of setting, but it does not yet seem to have been seriously tackled.



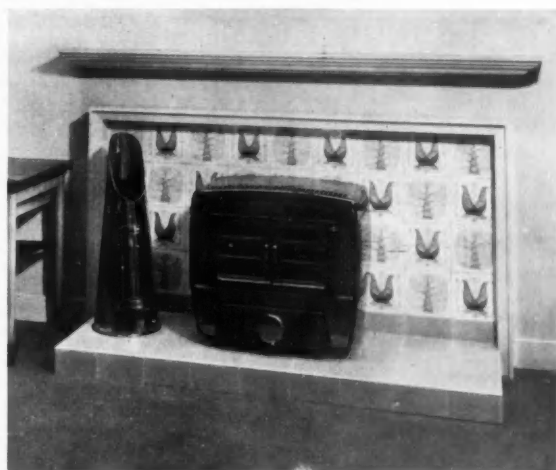
2 'Rayburn' convector fire by Allied Ironfounders Ltd. Surround by Gibson & Goold Ltd.

3 'Main' 55 gas fire by R & A Main Ltd. Surround by Forsythe Paton & Co Ltd.





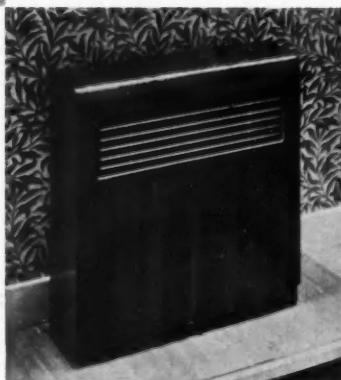
4 *Safono 'Sunray' stove by Federated Foundries Ltd.
Surround by Forsythe Paton & Co Ltd.*



5 *'Panda' stove by Allied Ironfounders Ltd.
Surround by Gibson & Gould Ltd.*

The gay tiles designed by Robert Stewart and made by Edinburgh's Dovecote Studios produced a fresh background for the 'Panda' stove, 5, and the independent mantel shelf was a successful variation from the usual treatment. An interesting exhibit was the 'Console' convector, 6, by Heatovent Electric of Glasgow finished in mahogany. The suspicious eye here immediately suspects artificial graining but a mahogany veneer is in fact incorporated as the finish to a special heat-resisting laminate which has stood up to extensive tests and practical use.

The 'Sunhouse' electric panel fire, 7, is a good model for those who want a powerful fixed fire without breaking into the wall. These appliances and others shown were free from antique finishes and strained shapes introduced in the mistaken search for streamlining. The Ferranti panel fire, 8, in a simple well proportioned marble surround in two colours by James Gray of Edinburgh is a distinguished, well detailed, honest job of work which can stand on its own merits. But neither this appliance nor anything else that was shown will completely satisfy the owner of an open fireplace who wishes to use electric power without destroying the basic characteristic of the fireplace, and yet who is not prepared to accept 'electric logs'. An honest answer to this quite familiar problem has not yet been found.

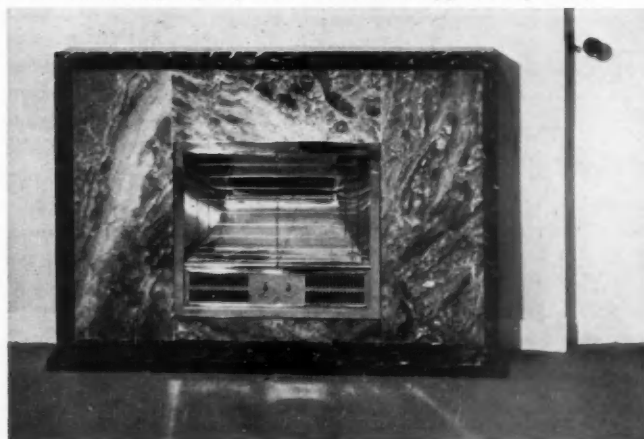


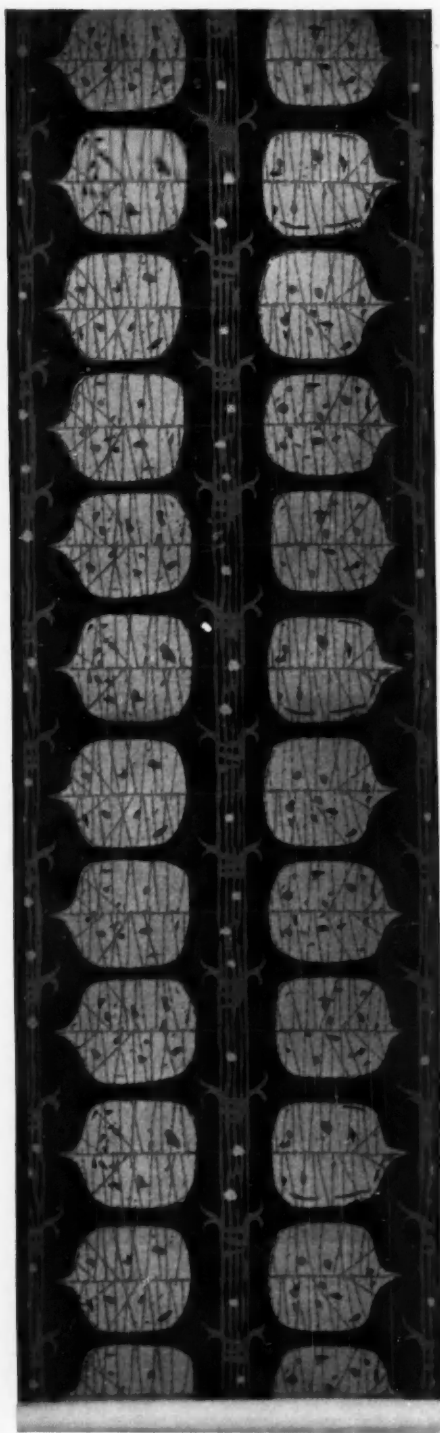
6 *'Heatovent' electric console convector by
Heatovent Electric Ltd.*



7 *'Sunhouse' electric panel fire by H. Frost & Co
Ltd.*

8 *'Ferranti' electric panel fire by Ferranti Ltd. Surround by James Gray & Son.*





One of the designs by Robert Nicholson from the 'Palladio' pattern book which is discussed on page 22.

In this article it is suggested that if the latest printing techniques available to the wallpaper industry are fully exploited, new patterns can be developed that will more directly express our current needs in interior design. Examples from two new pattern books by the Wall Paper Manufacturers Ltd are discussed and illustrated on pages 22 and 23.

Designing wallpapers

John E. Blake

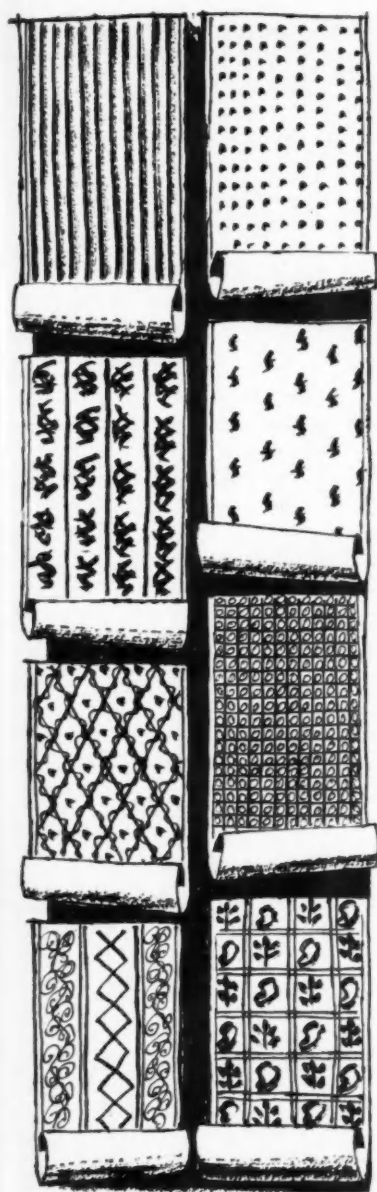
BY AN AGREEMENT made after the war by all the main wallpaper producing firms in this country, new collections of papers are issued only once every two years. Now, the two years have elapsed since the last collections were produced and during this winter and the spring of 1956 complete new ranges will be introduced to the public. Before, however, we begin to think about the merits of individual papers, a study of the approach to design in the wallpaper industry generally will provide us with a basis for making a critical assessment.

Two problems concern us here. The first is aesthetic – the direction in which the designer is moving and the type of design which the manufacturer selects; the second is technical – the way the design is interpreted by the manufacturer, and the limitations or advantages implicit in the methods of printing used.

Developing trend

The aesthetic problem is the most complex and the least tangible, partly because the levels of taste which are catered for vary to an enormous extent, and partly because personal predilections about design are often irrational and intuitive. The general direction in which wallpaper design has been moving since the war is, however, clear. The introduction six or seven years ago of a few simple dot and stripe motifs in expensive hand printed ranges was the first sign that wallpapers could in fact contribute to a modern interior, and help banish the austerity of wartime life as Dior's 'New Look' had already attempted to do in another field. Previously, apart from some well printed traditional designs, the dreary 'porridge' and embossed florals in cream and brown were all that could be found. Even today these designs make up the majority of papers on the market.

But the early dot and stripe designs, which represented a new approach to decoration, grew in popularity. Squares replaced stripes, small abstract motifs replaced dots, the scale grew and a desire for prettiness opened the way for small stylised plant groups. Four years ago a sprinkling of these designs was introduced into the sets of cheap



Dots, stripes, geometric patterns, abstract symbols, formalised plant motifs – all on a small scale; these are the characteristics of a type of design which is associated with the word ‘contemporary’. They are now giving way to bolder and more varied treatments which in turn call for more disciplined and imaginative draughtsmanship.

machine printed papers. Two years ago a wide variety of similar machine printed designs was available from most of the leading firms.

‘Contemporary’ – a style

The word ‘contemporary’ had been found, and caught on as the designs themselves had done, but such are the whims of fashion that the word today has become irremovably linked with the period in which it was first used. It now denotes a style which no longer satisfies our most modern needs.

‘Contemporary’ has not, however, disappeared from the market. There are probably more ‘contemporary’ designs being sold today than ever before. But as has been argued before in these pages, the market for design can be compared to a pyramid, with new trends filtering down from the top and spreading to wider sections of the consumer public as they near the base. Thus we can now regard ‘contemporary’ wallpapers as having reached a position somewhere below the halfway mark. As they move lower they lose more of the spark of vitality which inspired the original designs. What had appeared several years ago to be a new movement in decorative design has now become a weak formula capable of unthinking repetition and endless variation. Manufacturers who have been conditioned to years of conventional designs have sought to cash in on the widening market for ‘contemporary’, and misunderstanding the original intentions, have seen the style as easy game requiring little thought and no skill in draughtsmanship. The factory manager who complained that he “couldn’t see anything himself in this contemporary design” because “anyone can do it” had unwittingly arrived at the crux of the problem. There wasn’t anything in the particular designs he was referring to and clearly anybody *could* have done them.

Textiles’ lead

If ‘contemporary’ has moved down to the middle of our pyramid, what has taken its place at the apex? The answer, unfortunately, is very little.

Few people will deny that the movement towards richer surface decoration in room interiors is gathering momentum. Small abstract patterns no longer satisfy the more progressive public. The demand is for a new breadth of scale, yet the ‘blown up’ versions of abstract ‘contemporary’ patterns which have been tried by some firms go less than halfway to meet the real problem. Likewise the ‘contemporary’ floral designs, stylised and over simplified, lack the freshness and vigour that are required.

A strong lead has already been given by the textile industry in a number of new furnishing fabrics which have recently come on the market (DESIGN August pages 16–31). The best of these designs show a marked reaction from the formal geometry of the immediate past and reveal a renewed interest in natural forms. Flower and plant subjects, loosely flowing across the cloth, are drawn with creative power, a sensitivity and imagination seldom seen since the days of Morris. Here surely is a vital and significant contribution to interior design which cannot be ignored by the wallpaper industry. A deep and romantic regard for nature has been a fundamental influence in the development of English literature and art and is reasserting itself in

Designing wallpapers

continued



These comparisons suggest some of the shortcomings which exist in many floral designs today. The two wallpaper samples on this page are representative of many 'contemporary' florals now on the market, yet the drawing of the actual plant motifs has become a formula and few of the subtle qualities of the original plants have been expressed. In the plant drawings opposite by students in the School of Textile Design, Royal College of Art, the individual character of the subjects has been perceived and expressed with sensitivity and imagination. Such qualities can be accurately reproduced and are badly needed in wallpaper designs today.

countless ways. The appeal of natural forms is widespread and transcends the divisions between classes. The popular association of modern design with an esoteric group of intellectuals cannot be upheld when there is such a common basis of understanding.

Big differences of course exist between the requirements of wallpaper and fabric design: the former has to be seen flat and usually in a rigid architectural setting; the latter should be at its best when draped or seen in fluid arrangements. But all the elements in an interior are to a greater or lesser extent dependent on each other and are related to the prevailing mood of the times. It is the *spirit* of the best modern textiles which is so badly needed in wallpapers today.

Good and bad drawing

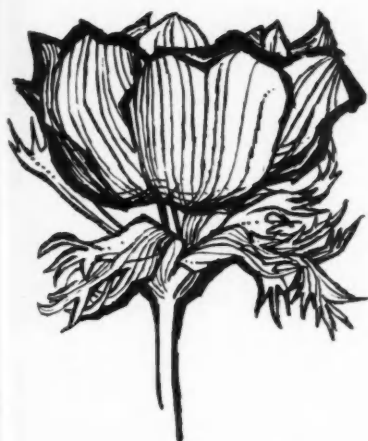
The keynote of the problem is drawing. Good draughtsmanship alone will distinguish the modern floral from its conventional counterpart. Too often the studio trained designer has been brought up to believe that good draughtsmanship consists of a series of tricks which, through many generations, have grown out of the traditional requirements of wallpaper printing techniques. These tricks – the use of 'greyed' colours, the meticulously built up planes of flat colour – can be a useful discipline, but if applied too rigidly allow little room for a personal vision. In their painstakingly methodical manner they seem more allied to bricklaying than to the nervous excitement which controls the artist's hand. With new printing techniques which are coming into use in the wallpaper industry, and which will be discussed later, these tricks are by no means necessary.

If the studio trained designer is responsible for the mass of conventional florals which is produced each year then we must look elsewhere for designers who can meet the demand for more original work. Many art schools can show examples of plant drawing which reveal a very different method of training. Here students are encouraged to look at familiar plants and flowers as if they had never seen them before and thus to express some new quality or extract some element that would provoke a sharper understanding. These qualities should be encouraged by the industry, but unfortunately some firms believe it is necessary to 'knock the nonsense' out of students before serious work can begin. Once the nonsense is gone, however, there is often little left that is really worth having.

Traditional techniques

To what extent is such an approach affected by the printing techniques at the manufacturers' disposal? The most common types of roller for machine printing (routed wood, rubber or metal, and the composite roller built up with copper strips and felt fillings) are in broad principle based on the traditional hand block: they are all, that is, fashioned by hand from tracings taken from the original design. Thus the finished roller is at least a third hand interpretation of the designer's work and discrepancies are bound to arise.

But lest this should be misunderstood three points must be made clear. Firstly, the roller maker's interpretation of the design is often surprisingly accurate and reflects an extremely high standard of craftsmanship. Occasionally, however, difficulties arise due to training and tradition, such as the craftsman who 'improved' a design by



*Drawings by Barbara Brown, above,
and Gwenfred Jarvis, below.*



Design: Number 84

straightening all the lines which the designer had deliberately drawn with variations of strength and direction. Secondly, most of the patterns which are produced are designed within a wallpaper convention and are comparatively easy to interpret, so that any inaccuracies that do occur are of little significance. Thirdly, these rollers cannot easily reproduce gradations of colour, broken effects such as may be produced by a dry brush or chalk on a coarse paper, or over-printing of transparent colours so that a third colour may be produced from two basic pigments.

These limitations are particularly significant where freely drawn designs of the type we have been considering are concerned. Much of their quality will depend on the personal 'handwriting' of the artist and the particular way he uses his materials.

New methods

Two printing processes are in use by the industry which are capable of reproducing accurately all these subtleties. The first is the photo silk screen process which, though well-established in the textile field, has not been used extensively for wallpapers. It has been adopted in the past primarily where the scale of a design would be too great for reproduction by rollers, or where designs are unsuitable for block printing methods. It is essentially, of course, a hand printing method and is therefore only used for expensive ranges. But its value in testing public reaction to experimental designs is considerable because capital outlay on equipment is small and limited production runs can be economically carried on. So far the possibilities inherent in the method have by no means been fully exploited by the wallpaper industry.

The restrictions which the silk screen imposes on the artist are negligible compared with traditional block or roller methods. Freedom of drawing and scale, richness of texture and colour can be achieved, and if carried out by designers of imagination will contribute a new element to modern interiors directly in key with a growing informality in our lives. Several groups of screen printed designs will be introduced by firms in the New Year pattern books and it remains to be seen how far designers have been allowed to escape from the conventions of the past.

The second process, photo engraved roller printing, can reproduce most of the subtleties achieved by the silk screen apart from the increased scale. Like the silk screen its use is common in the textile industry but for wallpapers it has been mostly confined to the production of wood or marble papers that require accurate reproduction of all the qualities of the original materials. It is a mass production process and is therefore ideal for printing cheaper variations of the experimental designs developed by the silk screen process.

Clearly a vast field of exploration lies in an extended use of these processes. It is intended of course that they should supplement rather than supplant the traditional methods because anyone familiar with wallpaper design in the past will realize that many exciting effects can be achieved by the older processes. A good example is the semi-traditional apple branch design which, with other designs from the 'Architects' and 'Palladio' pattern books by the Wall Paper Manufacturers Ltd, is illustrated and discussed on the following pages.

Two pattern books

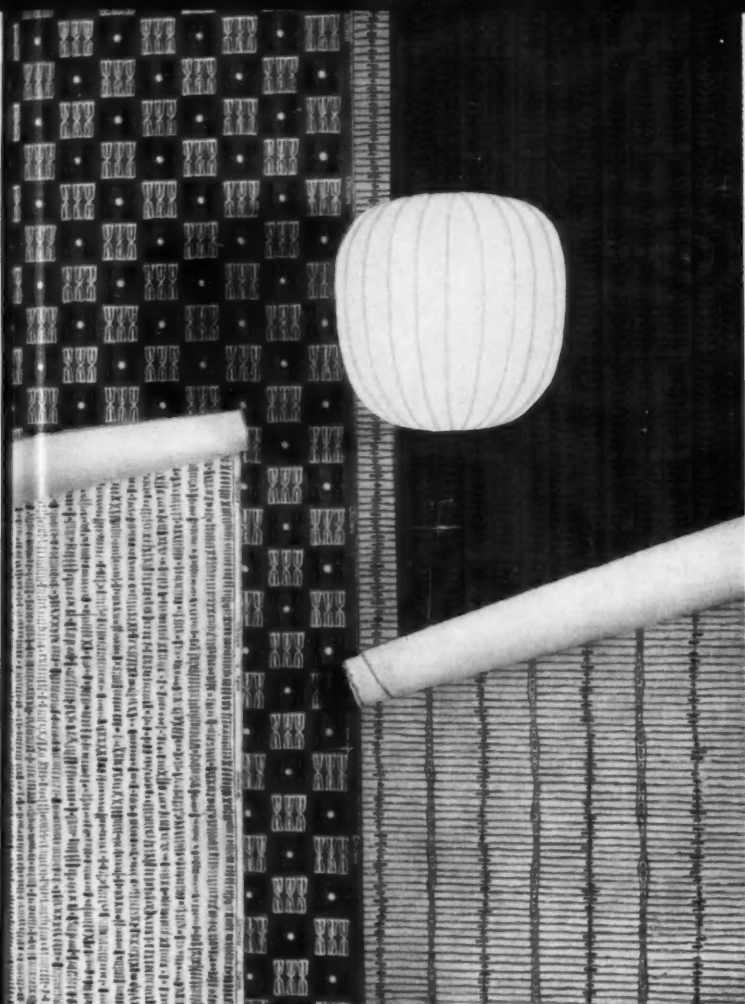
New designs from the Wall Paper Manufacturers Ltd

'Palladio' pattern book

Against the background of design and production outlined in the previous pages the new 'Palladio' book of screen printed designs seems less exciting than it could have been. But this range is the result of the first screen printing plant set up by the W P M group of companies and it is perhaps appropriate that the approach should be cautious.

Floral designs are little represented and in only a few cases has texture been exploited, although these are in designs of little intrinsic merit. Many of the patterns continue the character already established by the Crown 'Architects' ranges of previous years, the silk screen having been primarily used to give an increased scale and unusual colourings. Of these 'Pharos' and 'Basuto' are among the more successful and would create effective wall surfaces in large rooms. But by far the most original is a series of papers by Robert and Roger Nicholson. These without exception have been designed with a consciousness and clear understanding of the printing technique used. The full value of accurate reproduction can be seen in the tenuous delineation of cars, ships and steam engines in a design called 'Locomotion' or in the accidental brushwork of 'Columns'. Such qualities, which would be largely lost in traditional printing techniques, contribute much to the character and charm of the designs. In spite of these achievements there is still much work to be done if the Wall Paper Manufacturers Ltd is to make the most of its screen printing plant.

Top left 'Locomotion.' Two other colourways. DESIGNER Roger Nicholson.
Top right 'Basuto.' Two other colourways. DESIGNER Edward Hughes.
Bottom left 'Columns.' Three other colourways. DESIGNER Robert Nicholson.
Bottom right 'Pharos.' Three other colourways. DESIGNER Peter Devenish.



◀ Top left L46743. Two other colourways.
Top right L46635. One other colourway.
Bottom left L46724. One other colourway.
Bottom right L46749. One other colourway.

This detail of design, L46766, is different from all others in the set. Though traditional it suggests a point of departure for more modern work.



'Architects' pattern book

The new 'Architects' pattern book is a different problem. All the designs contained in this selection are machine printed and are in the lower price range. Unlike the 'Palladio' papers, their object is to reflect rather than to create the current ideas for interior design. There are some excellent patterns based on simple abstract motifs of a type which has now won an established place and will continue to be popular. An unusual note is struck with some relief papers which simulate slatted wood and with some washable papers suitable for use in the kitchen or bathroom. But again there is a notable absence of floral patterns, an exception being a design of apple branches which, though essentially

traditional in conception, is executed with a breezy freshness that is welcome. It is by no means, however, the answer to the problems that have been discussed in the previous article, and must be regarded only as a point of departure for further experiments.

In general if this collection lacks designs which break new ground it can at least claim to have established a standard which is consistent throughout and higher than in previous years. Further developments from this company, which was largely responsible for introducing modern wallpaper designs in low priced, machine printed ranges, can now be expected and will be watched with interest.

Ten year old experiment



The interior of the shop designed by Trevor Dannat.



Henry Rothschild

ON THE TENTH of this month Primavera, a small shop in Sloane Street, will be ten years old. This may not seem to be an event of any unusual or outstanding importance, yet in its way this modest private venture has had a significant effect on the growing interest in modern design in this country.

Primavera holds a unique position among furnishing retailers in London. Its distinction lies not so much in the fact that its wares are modern and of a consistently high standard (there are other bigger stores that can claim this) but that each of the products displayed has been personally chosen by the owner, Henry Rothschild, for the reason that he likes it rather than because he thinks it will sell. The fact that his choice *does* sell is a firm justification of what may appear to be an idealistic and uncommercial attitude.

Rothschild was born in Germany but, when study conditions under the Nazis became impossible, he came to England in 1933 and took a degree in chemistry at Cambridge. The idea of starting a shop, however, was first formed while serving in the R A O C in Italy where he became interested in a local pottery. He believes firmly in the value of the artist craftsman both as an experimenter and creator of new ideas in design as well as for the subtle qualities which he alone can produce. It is not surprising therefore that a large proportion of the articles for sale are craft products. At the same time he feels that there is too much craftwork which lacks a feeling for design and, conversely, too many designers who have an insufficient understanding of craft techniques. There is a wealth of talent, he feels, in the art schools, but the purchase tax on craft products is so high that few craftsmen can now make a living and too many art students are becoming teachers or turning to other spheres of activity. He is convinced there are many education grants given to art students which could better be used to relieve these purchase tax restrictions, particularly in view of the amendments recently introduced.

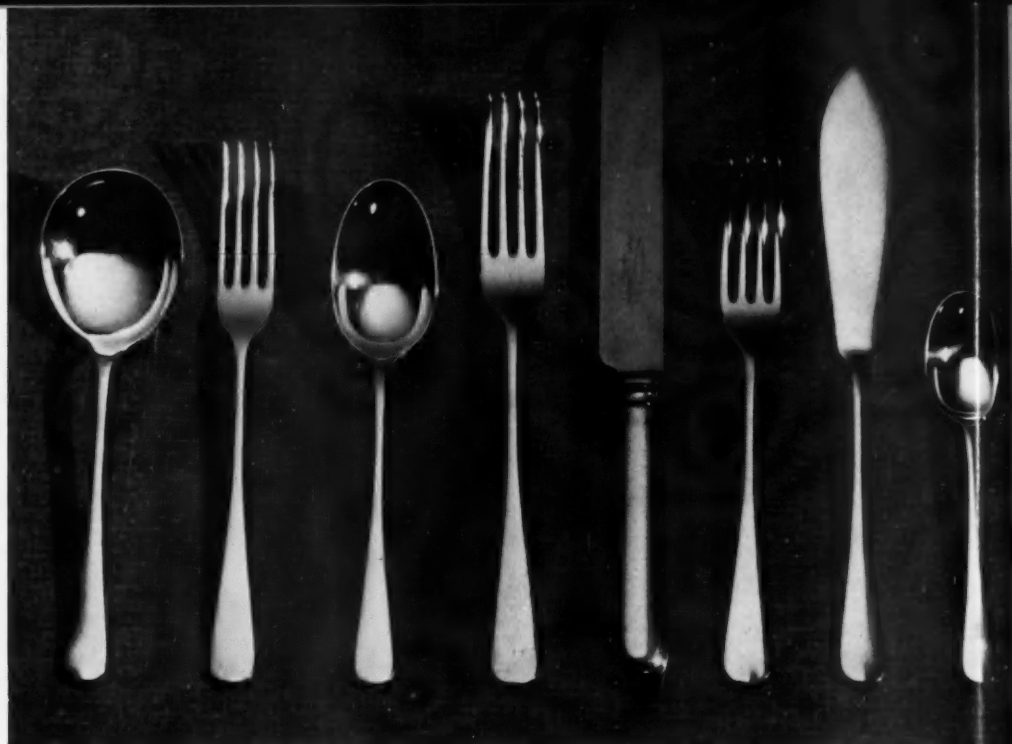
Although Primavera is an important outlet for the craftsman who can still carry on under these conditions it also serves other purposes. Designs from abroad which others may have thought too advanced or unsuitable for English taste have been successfully introduced into this country by Primavera. The shop has also printed its own furnishing fabrics and commissioned special designs for furniture.

The results of these activities is a fascinating display which all those interested in modern interiors would do well to visit. Typical products to be seen at Primavera are shown opposite. J.E.B.



Typical Primavera items

Fabrics: left, one of a range of plastic fabrics from Germany; centre, printed linen design by Edward Paolozzi; right, handwoven cloth by Estelle Landshoff. Wall covering – one of a series of textures made of woven rushes and cotton. Embroidery picture by Jean Edwards. Mosaic table by Jupp Dernbach. Salad servers in yew by A. K. Claiden. Enamelled dish by Eva Wilson. 'Trapeze Act', a decorative construction by Alan Smith for tenth anniversary exhibition. Orkney laundry basket. Wall plaque by Steven Sykes.



Cutlery and flatware

Mechanisation and modern design in Sheffield

Tom Gregson

IN THE HISTORY of British industry, there is no prouder name than that of Sheffield. It stands throughout the world for two things – steel and quality; and the value that the world places on these is reflected in its demand for Sheffield products.

All industries have their problems, but the cutlers and silversmiths of today have perhaps more than their fair share. They have inherited an industry that is split into a multitude of small firms – there are well over 300 in Sheffield alone – and in which a factory with more than 200 employees is exceptional. This multiplicity of firms was once a sign of the strength and prosperity of the industry; but now it is a weakness, for the small unit is often uneconomic and lives too near to the bone to be able to develop freely.

There is also a shortage of craftsmen in the industry, for few boys seem to wish to learn the trades in which

their fathers and grandfathers excelled. The Sheffield Cutlery Manufacturers' Association has recently introduced an apprenticeship scheme, and this may in time improve the situation; but in general, the days of a plentiful supply of craftsmen are over, and it is unlikely that the manufacturer will ever again have at his disposal the supply of skilled grinders, cutlers and silversmiths which the traditional methods of manufacture demand.

Both the lack of craftsmen and the superior economics of quantity production point to the need for increased mechanisation within the industry. This in itself is not necessarily harmful, for, given suitable designs, there is no fundamental reason why modern production methods should lower the standards of quality on which the reputation of the industry depends. But mechanisation does not come easily to an industry which has

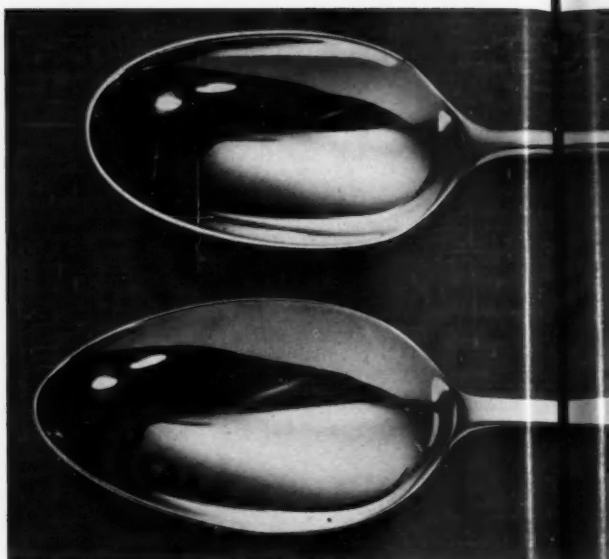
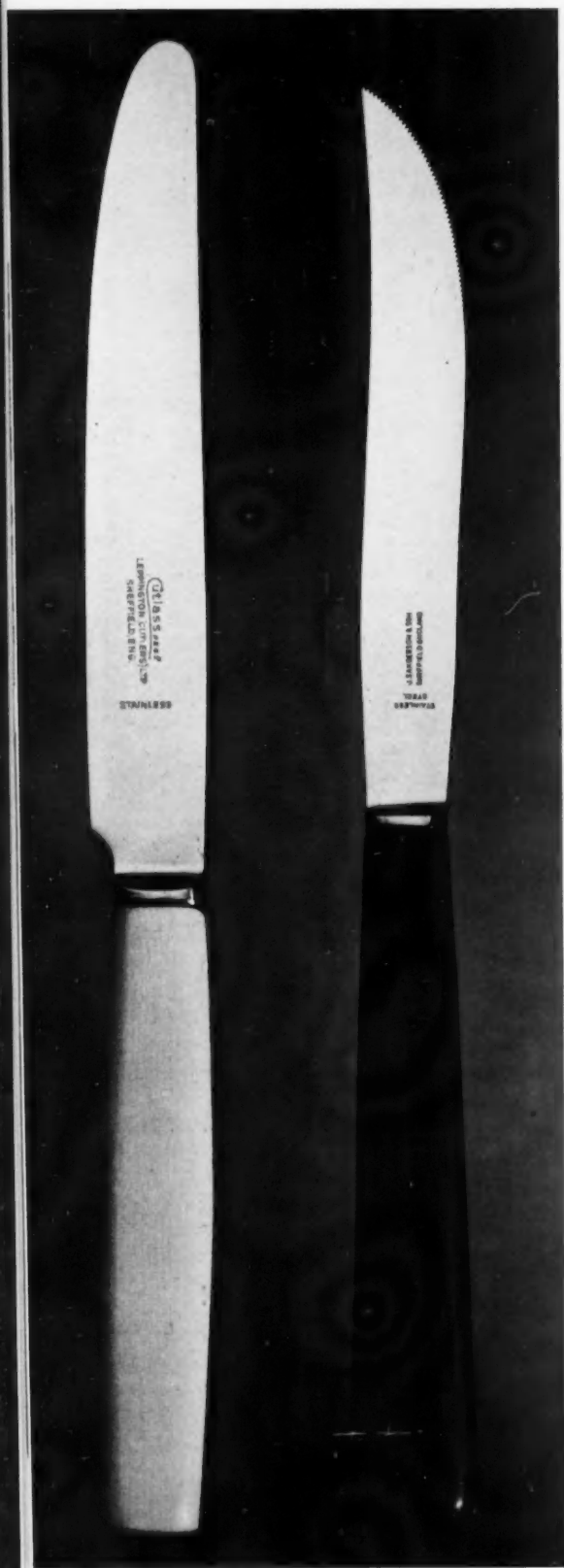
LEFT A traditional 'Rat Tail' pattern, 'Early English' by Elkington & Co Ltd of Walsall. Similar patterns are made by a large number of firms, and have never lost their popularity. It is an entirely satisfactory design, simple and – except for the knife illustrated – of considerable elegance.

For comparison, two modern designs are shown, RIGHT and BELOW, exemplifying two trends now apparent in the industry.

RIGHT is 'Pride' by Walker & Hall Ltd, designed by David Mellor. Most elegant, and as light as is consistent with strength and rigidity, there is a strong resemblance between the flatware of this pattern and that of the 'Early English'.

BELOW The 'Grace' pattern designed by Kenneth Holmes and made by Gladwin Ltd. This is one of a number of new patterns produced during the last 20 years, and between which there is a strong family likeness. All are plain and massive, the best, such as 'Grace', Latham & Owens' 'Spartan' and Roberts & Belks' 'Norween' (fork on page 29), having a rather solid air of distinction; the worst being clumsy and ponderous. It seems unlikely that these designs, which follow logically from the angularities of the 'thirties, will outlast the best of the traditional patterns. But their very plainness lends itself to manufacture in stainless steel, and it may be that from this stock will come the stainless steel flatware, for use on the dining table rather than in the canteen, to which Sheffield has hitherto turned so blind an eye.



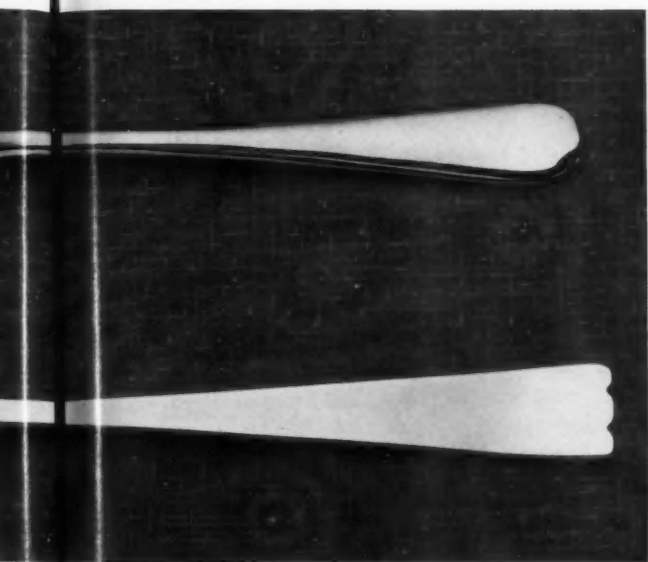


LEFT Many of the traditional forms of table knife are clumsy and unworthy of the best of the traditional flatware patterns. With the Cutlery Research Council to advise on metallurgical techniques and on the use of modern adhesives and plastics, the cutler now has at his disposal resources denied to his predecessors. These two good examples of modern knives are made by Leppington (Cutlery) Ltd, left, and John Sanderson & Son (1929) Ltd.

grown up around the skill of its craftsmen, and which rates craftsmanship above everything. Nor is its structure, with its large number of small firms, easily amenable to quantity production methods, with the implication of a heavy capital expenditure on plant followed by expensive tooling-up for long production runs. Finally, if craftsmen are hard to come by in Sheffield, production engineers are harder still.

But the change is inevitable and perhaps overdue; and the Sheffield manufacturers know that if they themselves do not face the problem, someone else will.

The question of design in the industry is closely linked with these changes. As mechanical methods play a greater part in production, so the cost of introducing a new design is increased. Thus, the tools and dies for a new pattern may cost a manufacturer between £500 and £1,000, which to a small firm represents both a considerable expenditure and also – since the market is to some extent an unknown quantity – a considerable risk. It is therefore tempting for the manufacturer to play safe and to continue to make existing patterns for



ABOVE Latham & Owens' 'Spartan' pattern, whose spoon is compared with Elkington's 'Early English', top, has been produced both in stainless steel and in E P N S. The use of stainless steel for flatware is comparatively new to the industry, and there is still a temptation to think of it in the same terms as nickel silver instead of treating it as a new and valuable material in its own right.

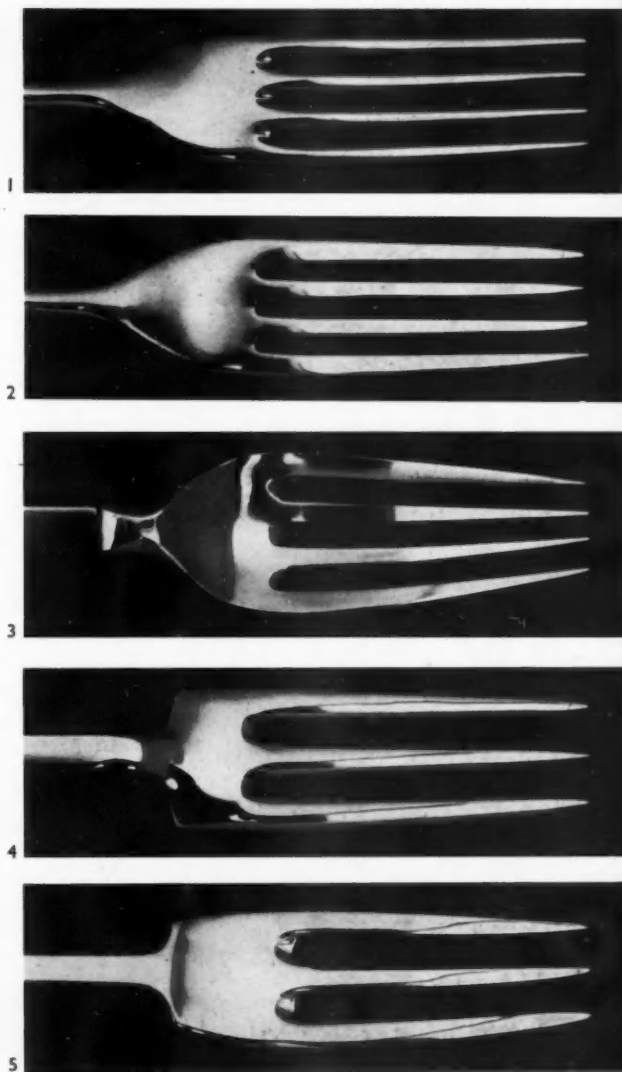
as long as he can sell them. Some of the traditional patterns, such as the 'Old English' and the 'Rat Tail', will never need to be replaced; but there are others which would be better forgotten, while too many of the more modern patterns date, all too obviously, from the 'thirties. It is a sad thought that it may need the stress of hard times within the industry to compel some of these patterns to give way to new and better designs that are more suited to contemporary taste.

But, however great the difficulties, it is clear that the trend towards modern methods of manufacture has put a premium on good design. Re-tooling for a new pattern is expensive, and it is obviously good sense first to spend both time and money on making sure that the design justifies this expenditure. Not many firms can employ a full-time designer, but for the others there are the consultants whose services can be invaluable to the smaller manufacturer.

It is on these designers, and on the production engineers with whom they must so closely work, that much of the future prosperity of the industry depends.

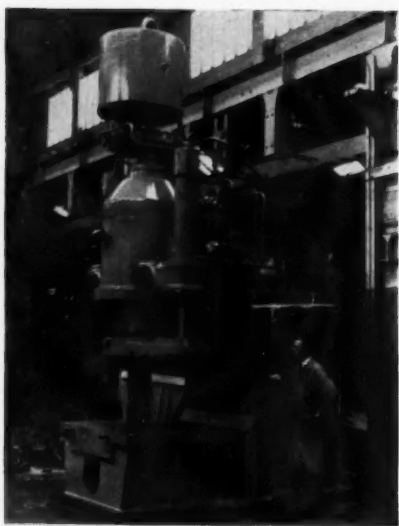
BELOW Points of departure for the development of modern design in forks.

- 1 An accurate but elegant statement of the ubiquitous traditional style by Elkington's.
- 2 Traditional shape redesigned to become a slim, tapering form by David Mellor for Walker & Hall.
- 3 Further departure from tradition is accomplished by this attractive design by Roberts & Belk.
- 4 A new approach to the problem is welcome although there is a conservative liking for four prongs. Made by Mappin & Webb.
- 5 The curving outline helps to reunite this design with tradition, but retains the force of an experimental approach. Designed by Kenneth Holmes for Gladwin's.

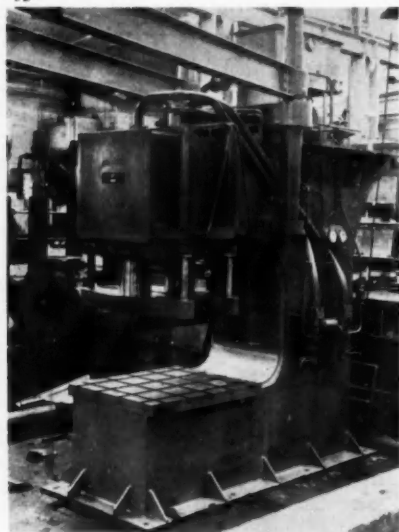


CASE HISTORY

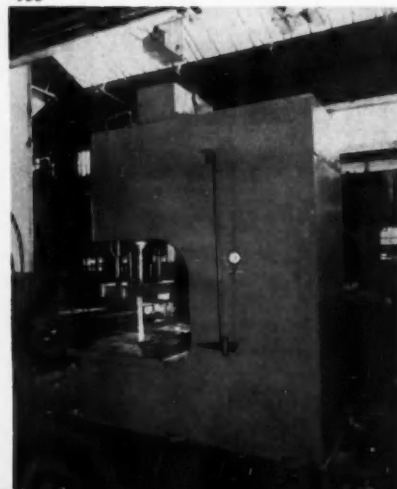
400 ton hydraulic press



1948
1951



1953



THE ILLUSTRATIONS SHOW stages in the development of a 400 ton vertical hydraulic press from 1948, when welded mild steel was first used in place of cast iron construction, until the final much improved version of 1955. This press is made by the firm of Hugh Smith & Co (Possil) Ltd, Glasgow, which specialises in the manufacture of heavy machinery for shipyards, such as electric hydraulic plate folding and flanging presses, plate edge planers and plate straightening rollers.

Two factors have controlled the work of D. C. Jeffrey, the firm's technical manager, in redesigning the press. First, modifications were allowed to accumulate until there were sufficient to justify putting into production a completely redesigned version. Second, the firm is aware of the value of a good appearance in heavy machinery as an important sales consideration, particularly in the foreign markets. One of the most important of these markets is Scandinavia where there is a demand for an appearance of orderliness and efficiency in the shipyards to match the fine appearance of the ships which are built there.

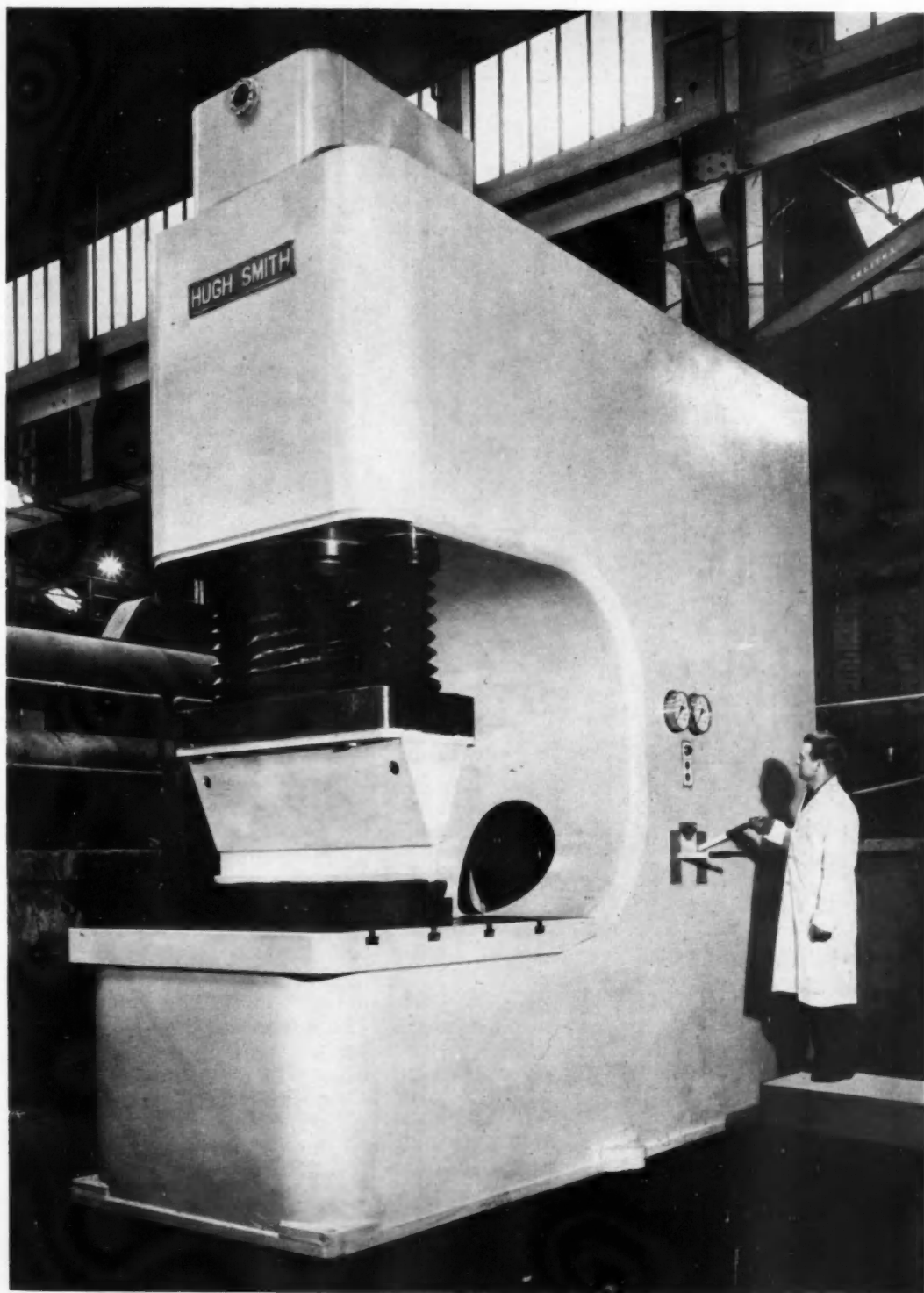
Apart from the Scandinavian countries the press has also been supplied to Spain and the home market, and there seems little doubt that the attention paid to organising all the elements of this complex machine into a simple well integrated shape has been an arbiter in securing orders.

1948 Mild steel welded construction replaced a cast iron frame though there was little change in outward form.

1951 The first redesign took place in this year. A hydraulic system, with pressure built up by accumulators from water supplied by external mains was replaced by an oil hydraulic pump. It can be seen how the smaller diameter of this pump enabled improvements to be made in the design of the main frame.

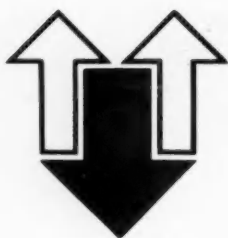
1953 The possibility of incorporating the oil hydraulic system within the main frame was exploited. The construction of the latter was improved by methods of internal strengthening and it can be seen how the gussets around the footplate have disappeared. Access to the oil pump is available through a manhole at the back of the press, though its packingless valves seldom need attention. The upper portion of the press consisted of a sheet steel cover which played no part in the strength of the main frame.

1955 In this latest model the sheet steel cover at the top of the press has been dispensed with and the whole of the hydraulic system incorporated within the load carrying structure. The gravity feeding hydraulic tank at the top has been refined to accord with the form of the remainder of the press. Pressure gauges, electric switch panel, pump warning light and control levers are neatly arranged at the side. When installed on the site the whole press is lowered so that these controls are at the correct height.



1955

Design: Number 84



A company's livery

J. Noel White

SIXTEEN YEARS AGO a small private company was formed to provide agriculture with a service for the scientific control of pests, weeds and plant diseases. At first the company concentrated on the selective control of insects, but later extended the service to include the control of weeds by sprays which are innocuous to crops. This method which made it possible to increase rapidly the yield per acre was intensively developed during the war when Britain was cut off from oversea supplies of food. Consequently the company, which was originally a spraying contractor, was forced to expand rapidly at a time when it was almost impossible to obtain the necessary new equipment from the United States. Undeterred it began to manufacture its own spraying equipment as well as its own chemicals. By 1952 Pest Control Ltd had two productive factories in the United Kingdom and was operating in six countries overseas.

It was at this point that the then managing director, Dr W. E. Ripper, became acutely aware of the firm's lack of a design policy. As he looked out of his office window he could see a hive of activity outside; vehicles of many sorts and sizes arriving and departing, tiers of drab and almost indistinguishable containers stacked



This drum shows how the new housemark and logotype can be used both on a large and a small scale. The essential information is displayed briefly and clearly across the centre.

at the loading bays, aircraft landing and taking off without any clear indication of their allegiance. There seemed to be no outward and visible sign of cohesion, no common purpose, no livery linking together the manifold activities of the company, only a multitude of apparently unrelated parts giving little impression of a large integrated undertaking which supplied 50 per cent of this particular world-wide market.

The company has the problem of putting across to farmers the efficiency of both the product and the service, so that the chemical control of weeds and pests is accepted as part of the farming routine, and not dismissed as a risky and new-fangled stunt. It is, therefore, important that Pest Control should not only be efficient but that it should look efficient; that it should appear professional without any suggestion of the makeshift or chancy.

Pest Control has plenty of opportunities to impress both the farmers and the public. A bulk handling system had been introduced to reduce costs, and lorries take the supplies out to the branches and the chemicals are then towed to the fields in trailers. Although vehicles with a high clearance can enter crops without damaging them until growth is fairly advanced, some



A simple but effective sign which dealers in the firm's products can display. The new housemark gives instant identification at long range.

crops must be treated at an even later stage when aircraft have to be used. This fleet of transport constantly visible on the roads or in and above the fields could testify to the scope of the service, if they were allowed to speak with one voice.

The management suddenly realised that in its present dress Pest Control was not having its full impact upon the outside world. The firm in fact lacked a consistent method of presenting its activities coherently to the public. It was fortunate for Pest Control that it was the managing director who saw the problem with clarity and imagination. So the proposal to work out a design policy came from the top and had to be sold to the staff, a less painful process than the staff having first to sell the idea to management.

The managing director's proposal was not universally regarded as a worthwhile proposition; there was considerable discussion in the boardroom before the importance of a co-ordinated design policy was accepted and a designer, F. H. K. Henrion, was appointed to analyse the situation and suggest a comprehensive scheme. His immediate brief was to design a housemark to replace the existing one which was difficult to recognise, and apply and establish a colour scheme for the

Design: Number 84



Two of the new containers with the revised system of describing the contents. Identification by colour has also been introduced to avoid mistakes when the chemicals are handled by native labour overseas. All containers now look as though they belong to the same family.



ABOVE The 'Weedmaster Mark II' low volume sprayer before it was redesigned in co-operation with the firm's engineering branch.

BELOW The new model. In addition to technical improvements the layout of the lettering has been reorganised to include the housemark and make a much clearer statement which is more in keeping with the performance of the machine.



company. Henrion's approach to the problem was direct and forthright, and the housemark he devised reduced the activities of Pest Control to the simplest visual terms. It consisted of a broad downward arrow representing the spray falling upon the insect and the weed, interlocked with two upward arrows which stand for the tall unfettered growth.

This design has three qualities which recommended it strongly to the company. It is quickly perceptible and memorable; once explained it can be understood in any language, anywhere, and it has the rare quality of conveying vital information. It can also be reproduced without loss of clarity in many sizes, from lorries to labels, and on literature or lapel badges. Henrion also designed a logotype to be used in conjunction with the housemark.

The colour scheme matched the housemark in impact. A bright lemon yellow was the basic colour, to be used with a bright green which provided a link with the previous colour of their lorries. All the vehicles went into the new livery of green and yellow which was rendered the more startling by being split in equal proportions either side of a vertical line drawn straight through the vehicle from stern to stern. This was done with some success overseas, where reactions to strong

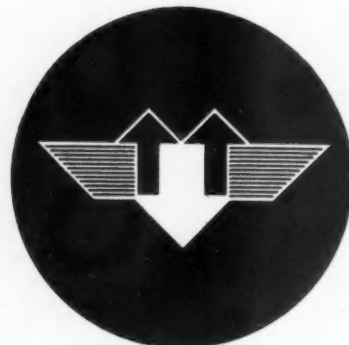
doses of colour are less squeamish, but in the sombre fenlands it was at first frequently regarded as an affront. Least opposition came from the farmers, who are accustomed to brightly coloured machines which can be identified two fields away on a dull November day. But the public protested, and the staff, while admitting the attention value, was sceptical. The scheme was therefore introduced in stages by discussion rather than memoranda. Gradually the various departments were won over; first the engineers, who are used to uniform instructions and tidy schedules, and last, perhaps, the pilots and research staff who are avowed individualists and suspicious of interference.

There were inevitably difficulties. Exactly the right colours had to be prepared and adhered to throughout, their tendency to be fugitive overcome and the method of application simplified. A design policy has been begun but not yet carried through to completion. Meanwhile, Pest Control had merged with Fisons Ltd, but within the framework of the integration Fisons Pest Control intends to continue and develop its design policy. Much still remains to be done before a complete scheme is established, but results already show how consistent attention to design can unify the most diverse activities of a large company.

RIGHT The motto of the firm combined with the housemark in three colours; red for the spray, green for the healthy growth on a yellow ground.
FAR RIGHT An adaptation of the housemark as a badge for the pilots of planes and helicopters – the firm's version of the R A F 'wings'.

BELOW The original letter heading in one colour.

BELOW RIGHT The revised version uses three colours, black, green and red, the logotype and the housemark. It has a character and style which conform to the general policy, but lacks the unity achieved in the labels.



PEST CONTROL LIMITED

Consulting Entomologists and Manufacturers of Pest Control Machinery and Spray Chemicals

BOURN, CAMBRIDGE

Telephone: HADDINGLEY 5156
Telex: 110000, Cambridge
Cable: Bourn-A.S.C. 86

YOUR REF
OUR REF



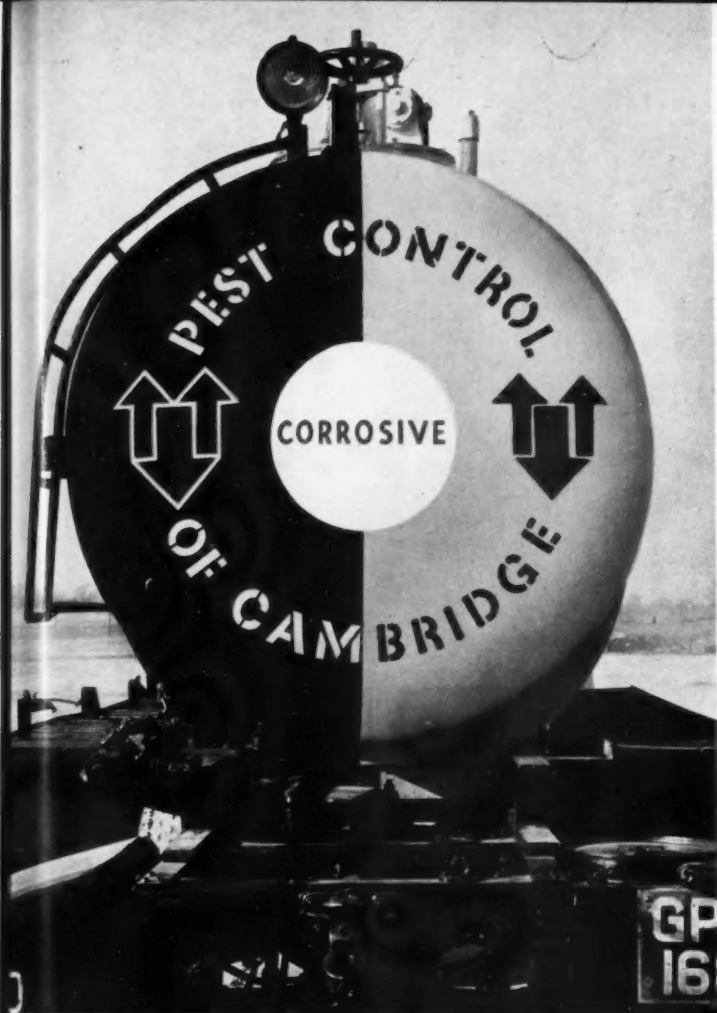
PEST CONTROL OF CAMBRIDGE

Consulting Entomologists and Manufacturers of Spray Chemicals and Machinery

Please reply to: PEST CONTROL (UK) LIMITED BOURN CAMBRIDGE

Order: BERTLEY'S ABC 078 Telephone: HADDINGLEY 5156 Telex: 110000, Cambridge

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DATE



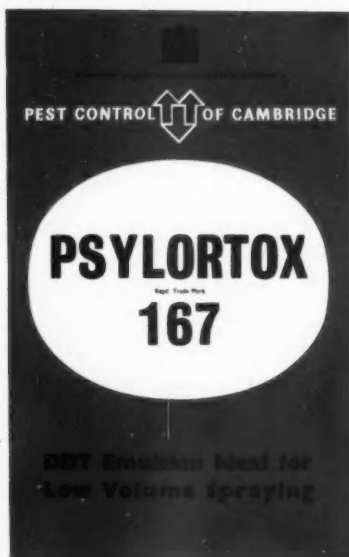
A tanker in the new house colours, green and yellow, which divide the vehicle vertically along the whole of its length. In this case everything is subjected to impact.

The small knapsack sprayer for which the designer has carefully studied the convenience of the worker who has to wear and handle this piece of equipment.



ABOVE A textile designed to include the housemark. The simplicity of the housemark is dominated by the motifs which have been introduced to elaborate its message.

BELOW The cover of one of the firm's leaflets in the same livery. Although the housemark and the Royal Arms have a very different character, the designer has combined them with success.



FRANCE

Citroen - current trends combined

The new Citroen DS 19, first shown to the public at the recent Paris 'Motor Show', has caused widespread interest. In discussing the achievements of the car E. G. M. Wilkes suggests, however, that its appearance is disappointing and does not match what 'The Times' has described as "the greatest piece of engineering adventurousness since the war".

A FAIR CRITICISM of any completely new car is only possible with some knowledge of its performance, reliability and passenger comfort. In the case of the new Citroen DS 19 the results of such an extended road test are not available and so it is only possible to sum up the design in terms of specification and visual appeal. Whatever the impression created by the daily press, the Citroen is not so much a car of the future as an attempt to be right on top of current trends. Thus the startling thing about the car is the hitherto unheard of quantity of up-to-date ideas contained in a single vehicle intended for mass production at a reasonable price.

Such practical features as the full width body, inter-axle seating, low build, separate light roof structure, large windows, wide bonnet, low air inlet and reduction in ornament are

to be expected as they have appealed to most progressive designers since Loewy produced his first post-war Studebaker. The full wrap round of the screen is a more recent development although well established in the U S A, but the absence of frames to the side windows is a Citroen refinement. For years designers have visualized the central pillar as a slender strut and this is exactly as it appears on the Citroen. It is interesting to compare this with the latest Buick arrangement in which the windows have very thin frames that wind down with the glass, and no central pillar at all.

The automatically controlled independent suspension and power assistance to brakes, steering, gear shift and clutch, are the most interesting of the Citroen's mechanical features. Again, there is nothing entirely new about power assistance





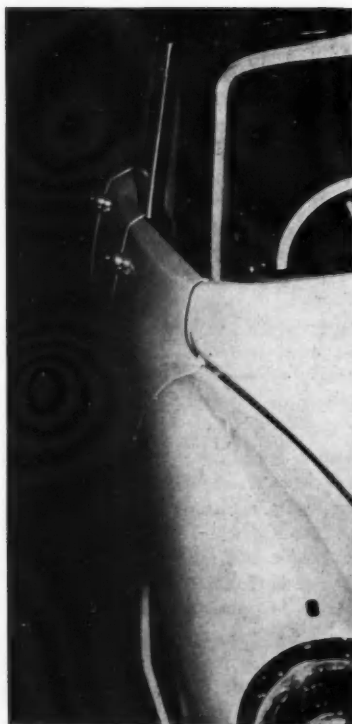
2 and 3 The car is to be manufactured in this country as well as in France and these pictures show some of the differences in detail in the two prototypes which have been made. In one of the models, **3**, the rear indicator lamps form part of, and terminate, the line of the roof, whereas in the other prototype, **2**, the relationship of the lamps to the roof seems insufficiently considered. Also in this model, **2**, the panels beneath the indicator lights are decorated with a simple and pleasing striped pressing. In the other model this is left plain. The ventilation outlet at the junction of the roof and rear windows breaks the smooth flow of the roof into the body and leaves an awkward and unresolved condition around the hinges of the boot door. Owing to the front wheel drive the boot itself provides exceptional luggage space.

3



1 Like its predecessor, first produced in 1934, the new Citroën is of unit construction and has the rear wheels set far back with little overhang. The roof, supported on slender pillars giving good visibility, is of reinforced plastic. The shape is simple, if a trifle austere, but the lack of a line of axis at 'waist' level leaves the shape of the body as a whole without a strong unifying motif.

4



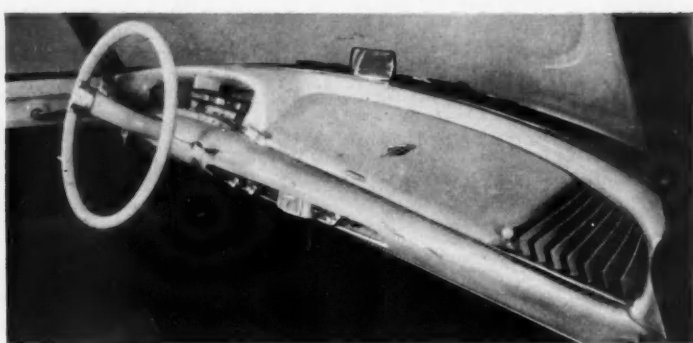
Photographs 2, 4, 5 and 6
by Sam Lambert.

4 The lack of strong 'waist' line is emphasised in this picture which also shows the weak shapes of the body panels around the windscreen pillars.

5



5 The front indicator light below the head-lamp seems to have been applied with little thought for its relationship with surrounding shapes. Such details detract from the other fine qualities of this car.



6 and 7 The unusual steering wheel with its single spoke is less disturbing to the eye than one might have supposed. The fascia, 7, however, is less successful. Though free of flashy decoration the panel shapes are untidy

and the design appears neither smart nor severely functional. The square clock, 6, fits unhappily within the cowl and the 'egg-crate' louvres for warm air are tilted backwards and would collect dust and small pieces of paper.

Citroen - current trends combined

of these items and it follows the American trend of providing effortless driving control and greater comfort. However, the Citroen achieves this power assistance in a very ingenious manner, operating everything from a single central hydraulic pump and reservoir, the former being belt driven from the front of the engine. The suspension is particularly interesting and is in effect an inert gas contained in a sealed sphere and compressed by the hydraulic fluid that transmits the wheel movement. Two corrector valves, connected to the pipe lines from the hydraulic pump, automatically correct the static height of the car according to the load that is being carried. The resulting ride is said to be superb and is a challenge to another outstanding suspension system recently introduced - the Packard 'Torsion-ride'. The gear change is not completely automatic but is a combination of automatic clutch and finger-tip hydraulic assisted gear shift. The power assisted steering enables a single spoke steering wheel to be used which is

also designed as a safety feature in the event of a crash. Again, this is an answer to the American trend for deep set steering wheel hubs for similar reasons of safety. All the power assisted items can also be controlled manually in the event of hydraulic failure.

More typical of Continental practice is the familiar Citroen use of a forward engine and front-wheel-drive (giving a compact mechanical unit and an unobstructed floor); the inboard front brakes (disc brakes incidentally); independent suspension on all four wheels; the economical engine size (a four cylinder unit of slightly under 2 litres), and the comparatively light weight (22 cwt). Functionally, therefore, the car attempts to combine the best from both sides of the Atlantic.

It is visually that the design is so disappointing. The imagination and skill that have gone into the mechanical design and general layout should be reflected in the body design. Instead, the body is austere and unexciting, and lacking in the sensitive handling of shapes and refinement of detail. One feels that the body might have started as something extremely attractive and then lost all subtlety and style in its journey through the drawing office.

The front wing fades into the body

in an indecisive manner, and there is a lack of any vigorous horizontal highlight at 'waist' level to tie the front and rear of the car together visually and provide a positive break between the car and its roof superstructure. As is so often the case, the enclosure of the rear wheel also does not help the appearance. On American cars, panel joints are carefully positioned so that the joint lines help the appearance, but there is no such refinement in the Citroen. The rear direction indicators are excellently positioned high up on the roof but their treatment is weak and, at least in the prototype shown at Earls Court, lacks co-ordination with the roof shape. The fascia is untidy and does not have an appearance of smartness or efficiency.

However, much of this criticism is directed at details that may well be peculiar to the prototype car at the 'Motor Show'. It seems unlikely that production models of the car will suffer from such lack of attention to detail. Certainly the car is not ugly. Rather is it typically French, and for some strange reason (possibly due to the long wheelbase, absence of rear overhang, and flush sided doors) it even has something of the character of its illustrious predecessor.

E. G. M. WILKES

AUSTRALIA

Modern and traditional rooms compared

MANY READERS will remember the exhibition 'Register Your Choice' organised by the Design and Industries Association and held at Charing Cross underground station in 1953 (DESIGN April 1953 pages 8-11). The idea on that occasion was to attempt to persuade manufacturers and retailers that there is a bigger market for well designed modern furnishings than they had perhaps realised.

Two rooms of equal size were shown side by side, one furnished with typical 'best selling' designs (all 'borax', conventional, overstuffed, glossy pieces) and the other with examples of good modern design. Members of the public were then asked to vote for the room in which they would prefer to live. From a poll of over 50,000, 60 per cent, or three people in five, stated a preference for the well designed room.

Earlier this year a similar exhibition, with exactly the same purpose, was held at the Melbourne 'Ideal Home Show' in Australia. There a ballot showed that two to one preferred the modern section, a result which suggests an encouraging growth in the appreciation of good design, particularly in a Commonwealth country which is often regarded as one of Great Britain's chief markets for traditional design.

More ambitious

The Australian exhibition was considerably more ambitious than the original English experiment and there are also a number of other differences. Firstly, there were three pairs of Australian rooms - dining rooms, sitting rooms, and bedrooms - compared with the single pair - combined sitting/dining rooms - at



SITTING ROOMS

Traditional Furniture is of Queensland maple with a dark, glossy mahogany finish. Settee and chairs have cane sides. MAKER E. H. C. Burgess.

Modern Furniture of blond Tasmanian ash. Coffee tables have black metal legs and two have tiled tops. DESIGNERS David A. Brunton and Bernard Howard Joyce. MAKER A. Hunt Son and Oliver Pty Ltd.



Charing Cross. Secondly, the Australian 'most bought' furniture was essentially traditional whereas the English had been 'borax' modern. Thirdly, the pair of English rooms had been furnished for approximately the same cost, whereas in the Australian exhibition the traditional furnishings were considerably more expensive than the modern. Finally, the Australian exhibition was combined with a furniture design competition, all the modern furniture shown being selected by a judging committee from a number of designs specially submitted for the purpose. Some of the winning designs have, however, subsequently been put into production. In the English exhibition all the furnishings were already in production and were available on the home market.

Three Australian bodies were concerned in the organisation of the scheme: the Society of Designers for Industry, which was responsible for providing the designers who entered for the competition; the Victorian



DINING ROOMS

Traditional All furniture is of Queensland maple with a dark mahogany finish. MAKER Prestige Pty Ltd. **Modern** Table is made of myrtle and obeche with metal legs. Sideboard is of Gourea mahogany, obeche and myrtle. DESIGNER Max Forbes. MAKER Worane Furniture.

The contrast of traditional and modern chairs can be seen on the right.



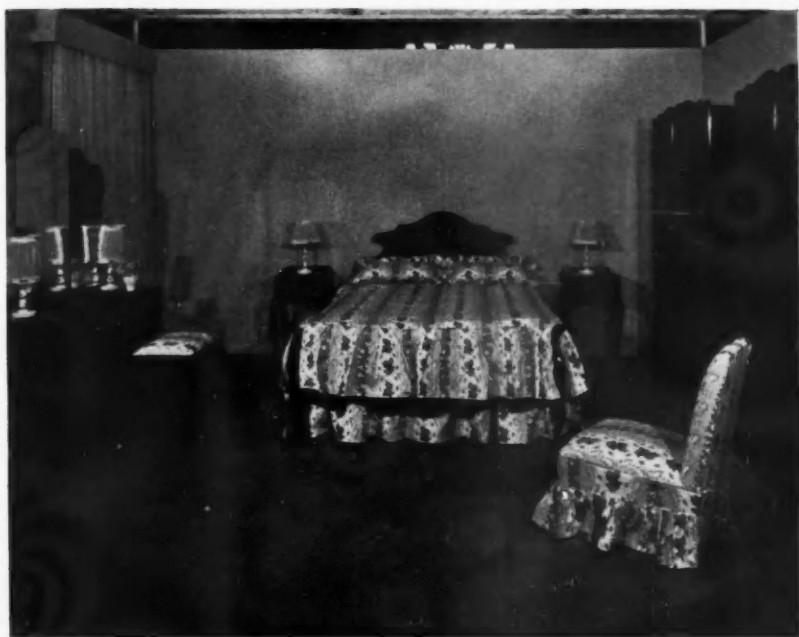
Furniture Industries Confederation, representing both manufacturers and retailers, which was responsible for making up the designs and provided £A500 in prizes; and the magazine 'Home Beautiful' for publicising the scheme, and for conducting a ballot among its readers as well as that held in the exhibition itself. In this ballot readers were asked to state in not more than 100 words the reasons for their choice, the best entry being awarded a prize of three suites of furniture of the winner's choice.

Australian comment

R. Haughton James, President of the Australian SDI, has sent us these comments on the exhibition:

"The most remarkable aspect of the scheme is that a group of Australian industries should finally face their obligation actually to pay for design. Although an increasing quantity of manufactured goods is indeed now deliberately designed, and the designs paid for, Australia has claimed that short production runs leave no margin for such luxuries as designers, and has cheerfully adapted notions culled from foreign magazines. An occasional trip abroad and a return with pockets stuffed full of overseas catalogues was held to be the master stroke of high-level design policy – and still often is. Against this the Australian industrial designer has achieved his modest standing by the greatest effort. And oddly, this standing is rendered even more precarious by the danger that 'design' may at any moment be enthusiastically taken up as a novelty and a stunt by manufacturers without any true grasp of its nature or demands. It is to be hoped that close co-operation between the three sponsors of the scheme will obviate this danger in the furniture trades."

The whole scheme appears to have created considerable interest and as a specific declaration of public taste cannot fail to be of value. A similar project has been planned for next year when it is hoped to associate the exhibition with a competition for an ideal small house.



BEDROOMS

Traditional Queen Anne style suite in Queensland maple with a glossy finish. MAKER W. Schembri & Sons.

Modern Furniture is walnut with a matt finish. DESIGNERS David A. Brunton and Bernard Howard Joyce. MAKER Trask Furniture Co Pty Ltd.

NEWS

REPORTS & COURSES

Annual report

In the introduction to its tenth 'Annual Report',* now published, the CoID says: "There is widespread acceptance of the principle that the Council should choose the products for selective exhibitions at home and overseas. . . ." In the ten years since it was set up, the report says: "The Council has become a valuable service to the home and export trade and an encouraging number of firms now turn to it for advice on how to tackle their design problems."

"The public shows an increasing sympathy with the lead given by the Council at its temporary exhibitions of goods chosen for their high standard of design. There is, in short, a more general awareness of the importance of design and its value to the national economy."

Reviewing the year's work, the report notes that the CoID has prepared displays of well-designed goods for seven overseas exhibitions. The Council's part in these was to select, collect and return the products displayed, and, in some cases, to design the display. This work has been done in association with the Board of Trade, British embassies and trade commissioners.

'Design Review' - the CoID's picture and sample record of well designed goods in current production - continues to provide the basis of selection for most of the CoID's exhibitions at home and abroad. In March 1955 it contained more than 7,000 items.

One of the most important services which the CoID provides for industry is the Record of Designers, which assists manufacturers by putting them in touch with designers. During the year 386 requests were received.

*Obtainable from the CoID, post free 1s 9d.

Swan song of a revolutionary design

After three years of struggle to make an outstanding design look ordinary, the Studebaker Packard Corp has finally abandoned Raymond Loewy's revolutionary 1953 Studebaker (DESIGN May page 22) in favour of a car which more closely resembles those of the American 'Big Three'. This swan song of one of the most original designs since the war will be discussed in more detail in a later issue of DESIGN.



RSA oration

At a recent meeting of the Royal Society of Arts the Duke of Edinburgh, President of the Society, presented the Diploma 'Royal Designer for Industry' to Uffa Fox, a distinguished designer of small boats, and the Bicentenary Medal for 1955 to Sir Charles Tennyson, for services to industrial design. At this meeting the annual oration of the Faculty of Royal Designers for Industry was given by Milner Gray, the recently elected Master, on the subject of "The Creative Urge". "Good design, absolute and universal," said Mr Gray, "does not exist. There cannot be absolute canons of taste: there can be standards, which should always be high, but should never become rigid." Good design can be recognised, he said, but only subjectively. "The question 'What is good design?' is a purely verbal dilemma." "Fitness for purpose", he went on to say, "is no criterion. . . . But it has proved a useful corrective slogan, especially at a time when unfitness for purpose was deliberately acclaimed as the contribution of art to manufacture and commerce."

RCA design course

One of the results of the vigorous reshaping of policy at the Royal College of Art has been the division of what was previously the School of Wood, Metals and Plastics into the School of Furniture Design and the Department of Engineering Design. The former continues under the direction of Professor Russell; W. J. Wood has been appointed Reader of the new department.

The present term marked the introduction of the new course offered by this department, being based upon a syllabus calculated to provide a complete and properly balanced training for the designer for machine production. In addition to providing designers with an adequate knowledge of current manufacturing methods and those techniques which he must exercise in carrying out his specialist function as a member of a design team, it also aims to give him a thoroughly realistic approach to the subject, so that he can fit into industry with the minimum of readjustment.

F. C. Ashford was recently appointed Senior Tutor and will combine this duty with his active interest in Scott-Ashford Associates Ltd, product designers.



Henrion covers for Design

F. H. K. Henrion has been responsible for cover designs for the magazine for the last three years. During that time his covers have evolved from the use of a number of stock 'shapes' to large illustrations and bold colour. In this work Mr Henrion has collaborated with the Art Editor Peter Hatch, and latterly Kenneth Garland. In January DESIGN will begin a new series of covers for which Mr Garland and other designers will be responsible.

Training designers

'The Design of Light Engineering Products' is Appendix II to the minutes of a recent meeting of the London and Home Counties Regional Advisory Council for Higher Technological Education. This two-and-a-half page report suggests changes in the existing arrangements for the education and training of product designers for the light engineering industries. It has taken two years to produce, and the circumlocutions resulting from long and fruitless argument are clearly to be seen. The points which the report does make, however, are all the more valid for having survived the ordeal.

The council is satisfied that there is a demand for product designers trained both in functional and appearance design. It is concerned with the teaching of engineering to art students, and the teaching of appearance design to engineering students. The report recommends, amongst other things, that technical colleges should recognise the prospects which lie open to engineers who also have an aptitude for the aesthetic side; that examining bodies should improve the standards of design of instructional and examination examples; that selected engineering students should be offered a three or four year course in product design, in the first place at the L C C Central School of Arts and Crafts and later at other centres; and that some useful revisions be made in National Diploma regulations.

These recommendations are far from revolutionary, but our education system, like other facets of our way of life, is governed by consent rather than by decree. The routine of committee and compromise is our way of getting things done. The next task is to press the other bodies named in the report to play their parts in the widening circle.

L. BRUCE ARCHER
Obtainable from the Regional Advisory Council for Higher Technological Education, Tavistock House, Woburn Place, WC1, price 6d.

Glare-free lighting fittings

The Atlas Lighting Division of Thorn Electrical Industries Ltd has recently introduced two new lighting fittings that comply with the Ministry of Education's requirements for school lighting. Both fittings differ from most modern designs in that they are light directors first and 'exciting shapes' second. They are intended to provide glare-free lighting by incorporating three principles formulated by the Building Research Station:

- 1 Concealment of the light source by providing adequate 'cut-off' between the lamp and the bottom edge of the shade.
- 2 A reduction in lamp brightness, by shading with some suitable material, to ensure a reasonable degree of gradation in brightness away from the 'hotspot' on the surface of the shade.
- 3 To continue the grading of light from the fitting to its background by allowing a large proportion of direct light to be directed upwards through the top of the fitting. One of the fittings is made by the new process of spinning acetate tubing over a former (DESIGN November pages 24-25). By altering the composition of the acetate the lower half of the shade is made translucent and the upper half transparent according to BRS recommendations. This type of fitting is light and non-inflammable.

TOP This school lighting fitting is spun from 'Rotaflex' acetate tubing. The lower half is a 'pearl' material which keeps the surface brightness within acceptable limits. The upper half is a 'crystal' mix which allows a large proportion of the light to reach the ceiling so as to avoid excessive contrast between the shade and its surroundings.

BOTTOM A lighting fitting of opal 'Perspex' based on studies of glare and contrast grading carried out at the Building Research Station.



SCHOOL



SCHOOL



CHILDREN

Road signs

A draft order published by H M Stationery Office for the Ministry of Transport on suggested traffic sign improvement invites comment. The signs used in this country were reviewed in DESIGN (April pages 23-27) and that article aroused some pointed criticism in correspondence. I pleaded then for a general review of our present system and for alignment wherever possible with Continental practice in view of the now international character of motor transport. It must be confessed that the present proposals do not go very far, though in detail some of them are to be welcomed. Thus the 'Torch' symbol for schools is discontinued and a pictorial sign of two children substituted. For some reason two separate designs are to be used, one for children coming to or going from school, and another for children playing. This would appear to be unnecessary, and one easily recognised device of two children would be sufficient. After all, children do also play on their way to school! The Ministry points out that the new signs are to bring us into line with Continental practice. In this connection it is interesting to note the now acknowledged

failure of the 'Torch' symbol; enthusiasts constantly err in adopting symbols which are too remote in significance for the ordinary man. Apart from this, however, it is a pity that the Ministry does not proceed to adopt the other principal traffic signs from the Continent, for 'Road works ahead' and for 'Major' and 'Minor Road' indications. The standard alphabet is slightly varied and useful instructions given for spacing, but no major improvement either in general signposting or advance direction signs is contemplated. The through-route signs which have been so conspicuous round London this year gave some grounds for hope that a really 'new look' was imminent, for in these new signs, the place name takes priority in size over the route number; but the old advance direction sign is to be continued although with a larger coloured background. It is of course a difficult business for a Ministry to admit the defects of a system laboriously developed over years, and equally it is expensive. All the same, the longer the mistake is perpetuated, the costlier it is to change. Perhaps the new northern *autobahn* will give the authorities an opportunity to invent a better visual code of traffic signs.

NOEL CARRINGTON

Report on the DIA

"The Design and Industries Association has still a great and unique function to fulfil in preserving sanity in design and by providing opportunities for members and others to meet and discuss freely problems connected with design in everyday life." In this way the Chairman of the DIA, A. B. Read, closes his remarks in the 1955 edition of the Association's Year Book. There appears to have been considerable activity in the regional branches of the DIA in Manchester, Birmingham and Bristol as well as in London, where the monthly lunch meetings have had considerable success in drawing large audiences. The lunch meetings are now being held in Overseas House, St James's, SW1, and on December 1 Ian Nairn will speak on 'Subtopia' at 12.30-2.30 pm.

The main article in the Year Book is 'Design and public taste' by Harold F. Hutchinson. In this provocative description of the good and bad paraphernalia there is to be seen, mainly in London, Mr Hutchinson analyses public taste and shows that there is no longer an excuse for the clutter and confusion of badly designed street furniture. With justification he turned to London Transport, amongst other sources, for examples of the more enlightened approach.

The Year Book concludes with a list of members. Inquiries concerning this independent body of persons interested in design should be addressed to the Secretary, Design and Industries Association, 13 Suffolk Street, SW1, Tel WHI 0540.

PUBLICATIONS

'Textile Terms and Definitions'

The second edition of 'Textile Terms and Definitions' was recently published by the Textile Institute. The textile industry is age old and based on the most primitive and localised crafts. It is also, paradoxically, a modern industry progressing as a result of much of the best scientific, technical and artistic thought of the day. Many of its technical and trade terms derive from its craft based beginnings. But scientific progress and the pace of modern business demand that an accurate and strict meaning be applied to words. This second edition covering some 700 terms is a painstaking and valuable work to be commended to everyone in the textile industry who values clear thinking. The booklet is available from the Textile Institute, 10 Blackfriars Street, Manchester 3, price 5s.

Form design

A booklet giving much valuable and practical advice on the design of forms has been published by the Office Management Association. It has been prepared by the Organisation and Methods Study Group of the Association to draw attention to the growing need in modern industry for quick and simple methods of recording information. Examples of good and bad arrangements are given and a type sheet showing

examples of typefaces suitable for use on printed forms is included. The booklet should be read thoroughly by all those responsible for designing forms, and particularly by those whose creations leave the average form filling citizen stunned and bewildered by the complexity and often irrelevant information required. The booklet is available from the Office Management Association, 58 Victoria Street, SW1, price 6s.

MISCELLANEOUS

Death of Hans Knoll

Hans G. Knoll, President of Knoll Associates Inc, well known American manufacturers of modern furniture and textiles, died recently in a tragic motor accident. Knoll was one of the pioneers of modern design in the U S A and collaborated with leading internationally known architects and designers. He built Knoll Associates into a world-wide organisation with offices or factories in Belgium, Canada, Cuba, France, Germany and Switzerland as well as the eight offices and three factories in the U S A. He is survived by his wife Florence S. Knoll who, with other officers, will carry on the management of the organisation.

Education through art

The Regional Advisory Council for the organisation of further education in the East Midlands has agreed to a proposal that a display illustrating the work at schools and colleges of art in the region should be staged in the council's committee room as a permanent feature (with changes once a term). The subject of the first exhibition was commercial design, and the second display will be concerned with photographs and drawings of objects in wood or metal. Pottery, silverware, furnishing fabrics, etc, are to be shown later. A booklet will be published on careers in art and facilities for training in the East Midlands.

Designers for T V

The BBC Television Service has secured the services of a number of new designers. Misha Black, Milner Gray, Ronald Ingles, Alexander Gibson and Clifford Hatts, all of Design Research Unit, will be designing programmes for television in the coming year. Natasha Kroll, display designer, is joining the BBC staff to assume responsibility for the design of all talks and women's programmes. Bruce Angrave, who recently won the Producers' Guild Award for his designs for the Priestley series, is also under contract.

New President for ASID

The new President of the American Society of Industrial Designers is Arthur N. BecVar, Manager of Industrial Design, Major Appliance Division, General Electric Company. This is the first time that a design director working within industry has been elected President of the Society. Mr BecVar joined the company at Louisville in 1945 and has developed such innovations as the wall refrigerator, the kitchen centre and other built-in appliances.

Send us your cards

Christmas cards are no longer peculiar to the family circle, for they also come to remind us that business relationships have a personal and friendly basis. DESIGN will review some personal and commercial cards in the New Year, and invites you to send to the Editor any interesting ones that you make or receive - after you have taken them down on Twelfth Night.

LETTERS

Some readers' comments on our special September issue, which was devoted to design for the railways, are printed below.

Better on the Continent

SIR: Travel by rail is so much more agreeable on the Continent not only because of the many outstanding design features in such trains as the Swiss Leichtschneellzüge (all-metal light-weight express trains) with their wide-opening doors in the centre and at each end of the coach, with beautiful springing and amazing speeds, but also because of the smaller touches.

For example, wherever you go in Switzerland or France, one of the best places to eat will be the station buffet - run privately, of course. And on the platforms, trolleys will come alongside all of the major trains to sell refreshments, papers and magazines at all times, and even in many small stations.

Or again, sleepers in Germany have the very simple but extremely useful idea of electrically lit signs, at night, stating "Beds Free" - thus giving the people who feel the need of a night's rest a chance to book reservations even at the last minute - and, of course, securing a better booking for their sleepers.

What I have found most infuriating in British trains (and, by the way, in many American trains as well) was the almost total absence of destination boards on coaches. On the Continent, even the lowliest local will have a sign clearly showing its destination, and if the last three coaches are for Geneva and not for Lausanne, they are clearly marked. Here, a few of the better trains have signs but often only with the illuminating information that they are the "Red Dragon" or "Blue Tulip" or some other floral or geographic name, but without any hint of destination or principal stopping places. Only Western Region has very ugly, big wooden boards running along the roof of some of its through trains, with this information on them. Why not use the practical, legible and quickly adjusted metal signboards as found on all Continental through coaches? In addition, in the case of many of the latter on international trains, the same signs are also to be found in the corridor of the coach, another very helpful device.

Mostly, alas, trains come in with some paper scraps (half-torn) pasted in their windows, the loudspeaker blares out an incomprehensible gibberish, and as the whistle blows, people turn to porters or guards with frantic requests for information as to whether this is the 6.10 for Birmingham or the 6.40 for Swansea. This, of course, is also due to the non-existing, or else utterly antiquated, direction indicators on most British Railways' platforms. At terminals, the matter is easily solved, since there are ticket-controllers at each barrier. But in stations such as Snow Hill, Birmingham, some withered old wooden signposts point vaguely in the direction of one to four possible platforms, giving stopping places, but no indication of train departure time.

Again, things are better, neater, cleaner on the Continent, where electric or well written metal signs (one for each train) are posted on each platform, giving train name or number, calling places, destination, time of departure and period of delay, if any.

As for clean stations, this would appear

to be an utter impossibility as long as freight and passengers have to use the same platform. In all the major Swiss and German stations, there are two platforms, one for goods, and one for passengers, so that no one is molested by streams of hooting, roaring tractors with from three to eight wagons behind them. But this would mean a major reconstruction of all British Railways' terminals, which, in turn, will have to wait the next H-bomb, presumably.

GEORGE LOBBENBERG
Director
Corsets Silhouette Ltd
Shrewsbury
Shropshire

American view

SIR: It is my conviction that the future of the railway passenger business will be dependent on light-weight equipment of the general characteristics of our latest motor train (DESIGN September pages 22 and 23).

I was therefore immensely interested by your statements on page 20 about the British Railways' South Coast service and halving the present schedule. Surely British Railways will have to do better than the diesel motor train shown on page 21 if they hope to perform in such a manner. I would very much like to see the specifications for this new train to compare it with our latest design.

Obviously, there is much more to the merchandising of rail travel than equipment yet it is one of the most important variables in the equation for successful operation. It would seem that the British Railways would find the answer in passenger carrying equipment in a train similar to our concept. Engineering details would necessarily differ for clearances, high-level platforms, etc, but the validity of light-weight, high performance, single axle, double ended, multiple-unit design will be proven before too long.

ALAN R. CRIFE
Director of Design
The Chesapeake and Ohio
Railway Co
Cleveland, Ohio

Station approaches

SIR: The admirable articles concerning railways in your September number are fascinating and timely. Since my earliest youth railways and all about them have had for me an inexplicable attraction. One of my greatest thrills as a boy was a visit to Guildford 'Junction', to give it its Victorian title, and to watch entranced the Portsmouth expresses of the L S W R (locos light green) glide off into the tunnel with their loads of holiday-makers, Isle of Wight bound, or the S E & C trains (locos dark green) of the rather mysterious Reading branch, or the funny little L B & S C locos (yellow) puffing off on their cross country amble to Horsham. The small boys today can experience no comparable thrill in watching the dull green headless caterpillars of Southern Electric, though be-draggled little steam trains - veritable museum pieces - still potter in and out from the Reading and Horsham branches.

The station itself has changed very little over the years, except for an overhead bridge, presumably to allow passengers to escape pneumonia from the damp old tunnel under the platforms; the same little old booking office, the same hideous waiting and refreshment rooms, the same dreary yard outside the main entrance - a cul-de-sac so narrow that larger cars are unable to turn round without reversing several times.

Now, the comparisons drawn in your articles between British rolling stock and station architecture with that, say, of Germany, Denmark, Switzerland or North America, are thought-provoking and stimulating, but your correspondents have not so far touched

on the matter of station approaches. When the visitor emerges from, say, Copenhagen main station, or Dusseldorf, or Frankfurt, or Rome, or Zürich, or Bonn, to name a few at random, he finds himself in a handsome boulevard, more often than not with a formal garden, bright with flowers and shrubs, in the foreground, dignified and inviting. For the same visitor to emerge from Paddington, say, or Charing Cross, or for that matter Birmingham New Street, or Derby, or Warrington, or Luton, or Cambridge, is a dismal and depressing experience – a tawdry street or a mean yard, decorated by huge hoardings proclaiming the virtues of different brands of beer, or aperients or tinned peas, too limited in space to accommodate the waiting cars and buses.

It will of course be argued that space in our crowded cities just will not permit of wide welcoming station approaches. Praed Street, Paddington, or the Strand, or New Street, Birmingham, are incapable of improvement anyway. But when Luton station was rebuilt in the 'thirties surely a less repellent approach might have been planned? Cambridge station, that prize monstrosity, is surely due for rebuilding – my own first impression on arriving there as a Freshman was "Abandon hope all ye who enter here". There must be an opportunity here of planning worthy and cheerful surroundings.

This is only one example but maybe the suggestion that the surroundings and approaches to our stations might gradually be made a little less dreadful will fall on receptive ears.

J. L. PIGGOTT
Chairman
Design and Research Centre
For the Gold, Silver and Jewellery
Industries
26 Dover Street, W1

OTHER LETTERS

Symbol criticised

SIR: In your article under the title 'The Symbol for The Design Centre' (DESIGN October page 32) you say: "The symbol should evoke quickly an association with The Design Centre."

For those of us who wear glasses it will do nothing of the kind. We shall recall: "Tell me when the lines are all equally black"; and the eyeball centrepiece will strengthen our conviction that this must be the symbol of some fraternity of opticians.

H. F. NICHOLLS
22 Boughton Lane
Loose
Maidstone, Kent

'Points and Pointers'

SIR: I enjoy reading your publication and usually find it helpful and stimulating, but on at least two occasions I have been shocked into doubt by what appears to me to be a most careless pronouncement.

In DESIGN October page 12 you said of car design "The best [body] designs are to be seen in the Ford range". This seems to me to be a most ill-considered opinion. I am not connected in any way with the motor trade but I imagine that your arguments in favour would be headed by simplicity of pressing, restrained ornament, and ease of cleaning. I wonder if you have ever considered some of the points that could be raised against these bodies or if perhaps the dollar dust has got into someone's eyes?

As I see it the Ford body is basically one rectangular box with radiused corners placed upon a yet larger rectangular box with radiused corners – aesthetically not very pleasing. In a motor car of even modest

Continued on page 46



N-E Region's experiments

SIR: I was most interested in the comprehensive survey on railway design in your September issue. I was, however, disappointed at the lack of any reference to many interesting features.

I felt that less than justice was done in your article to British Railways as a whole and to this region in particular, especially as several of your comments and illustrations implied that a particular thing was British Railways' last word on that subject.

On page 39 a picture of the waiting room at Twickenham was illustrated which you describe as "basically pleasant but no thought has been given to the choice of furniture which could hardly be more crude". In this region, in an endeavour to break away from this unimaginative treatment, we opened in December 1953 the first of a new type of waiting room at York. This room, which is open day and night, had previously been subjected to very heavy and malicious damage. Since its modernisation there has been no trace of wanton damage – merely normal wear and tear. Encouraged by this we designed and opened four more rooms – two at Newcastle, one at Darlington (see illustration below), and a further one at York. These rooms are very attractive indeed – certainly by railway standards. The reaction of the public is quite embarrassingly commendatory, so much so that this type of

The pictures on this page show recent developments by the North-Eastern Region of British Railways and are referred to in the letter by S. W. Jesper above.

treatment is being adopted as standard for a considerable number of other waiting rooms.

A pleasing effect has been achieved in the concourse at Bradford Forster Square Station (see illustration above).

The original high overall roof has been removed and replaced by a modern form of portal frame construction. Continuous glazing is provided on either side and advertisement space is arranged on the end spandrels and side friezes. The concourse is now enclosed from the platforms, and this, together with ample space and good lighting, adds to the general cleanliness and comfort.

The vast majority of station exteriors are in sufficiently good repair to warrant no structural alteration, and though many of them are not aesthetically pleasing, much can be done by imaginative painting schemes. An example of this is Ilkley Station where the drab greens have gone completely by the board and been substituted by Oriental blue for the columns, dove grey for the main structures, vellum for window frames and roofs and deep orange for the main doors to the booking hall, and the same colour for the buffer stops. There is every likelihood that this colour scheme, suitably adapted, will become the standard for many other stations in the region.

I trust that I have said enough to let you see that many of the things you criticised in your issue are very much in the minds of the North-Eastern Region.

S. W. JESPER
Public Relations and Publicity
Officer
British Railways
North-Eastern Region, York



performance frontal area has a considerable effect upon air-resistance and consequently fuel economy, not a strong point of the cars in question. Again, road-holding is of great importance in a car, and here again these boxes prohibit the ideal or anything approaching the ideal. On a very minor point by comparison with the latter the boot space in the bottom box is disappointingly small due to the design of the body.

W. B. F. MOORE
Bronwydd
Daniel Road
Mancellan, Atherstone

With compliments

SIR: As a normally enthusiastic reader of DESIGN, I was considerably taken aback on reaching page 19 of the October 1955 issue to read the reference to Sir Alma Taddema. This gentleman is presumably not to be confused with Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema - or is this perhaps a new mode of address, as one might say 'Sir Churchill' or 'Sir Eden'? A careless compositor might account for the extra 'd' and the missing hyphen (though there are proof-readers, surely?).

As if this were not enough, I turn to page 18 to admire the congratulatory address from the Society of Industrial Artists to the Royal Society of Arts, and there observed that 'our labours are complimentary'. To whom are they complimentary? Or did Sir Hugh Casson mean, as the context might lead us to believe, that 'the ideals of our Societies are as similar as our labours are complementary'; and if so, is it not rather a pity that Professor Robert Gooden and his students went to such enormous trouble to perpetuate that unfortunate 'i'?

Sir, I am prepared to be corrected; but if these criticisms are well founded, we should

take heed. There are already complaints in educational circles that the talented scientist has all too often neglected to master the English language: I, for one, should be sorry to see this accusation extended to the artist.

ANTHONY HOBSON
Flat 1
2 Stonygate Road, Leicester

Too limited?

SIR: Although serving a very useful purpose as a clearing-house for the best in international appearance design, and acting as a necessary stimulus to those concerned with the development of British manufacturing production, DESIGN fails in its aim by confining its comments too specifically to appearance and finish alone.

Convenience of manufacture, economy of production, suitability for use and simplicity in servicing are as important in building a product reputation as is showroom appearance. In fact, many instances can be cited where final appearance is only a logical outcome of detailed attention to these other factors - as indeed it should be.

Appearance should be not only satisfying to the user but also the visible confirmation of the correctness, in modern competitive terms, of these other basic factors.

These are critical challenges which the magazine does not meet in its present editorial policy. Yet only by admitting the existence of these vital contributory elements can the confidence of the working technician be retained and his enthusiasm stirred to continual development to meet world markets.

FRANCIS PEACHEY
153 Windsor Avenue
Hillingdon, Uxbridge, Middlesex

'Fabritecture'

SIR: In this country I have adopted the word 'Fabritecture' as a convenient and distinctive appellation for the fusion of design art in all branches of industry.

It occurs to me that this merger of the aesthetic and the practical merits such a distinctive name, and if you and your associates should happen to find that such a new word is a useful supplement to your current vocabulary, it would please me very much. Incidentally, the pursuit of 'fabritecture' activities will naturally be by 'fabritects'.

OSCAR A. TURNER
179 North Wells Street
Chicago 6, Illinois, U.S.A.

Designers in this issue

Bruce Angrave, MSIA (44). F. C. Ashford, MSIA (42). Arthur N. BecVar, SID (44). Misha Black, OBE, FSIA, MINSTRA (44). Barbara Brown (21). David A. Brunton (39). A. K. Claiden (25). Trevor Dannatt, DIPARCH, ARIBA (24). Jupp Dernbach (25). Peter Devenish (22). Jean Edwards (25). Max Forbes (40). Uffa Fox, RDI (42). Kenneth Garland (Art Editor). Alexander Gibson, ARIBA, AADIP (44). Milner Gray, RDI, FSIA (42, 44). Clifford Hatts, ARCA, MSIA (44). F. H. K. Henrion, MBE, FSIA (32-5, 42). Kenneth Holmes, OBE, ARCA, MSIA (27). Edward Hughes (22). Ronald Ingles, MSIA (44). R. Houghton James (41). Edwin F. Jaquet (12). Gwenfred Jarvis (21). Bernard Howard Joyce (39, 41). Natasha Kroll, FSIA (44). Estelle Landshoff (25). Raymond Loewy, SID (42). David Mellor, DESRCA (27, 29). Robert Nicholson, MSIA (18, 22). Roger Nicholson, ARCA, MSIA (22). Edward Paolozzi (25). A. B. Read, RDI, ARCA, FSIA (43). Alan Smith (25). Robert Stewart (17). Steven Sykes, ARCA (25). Eva Wilson (25).

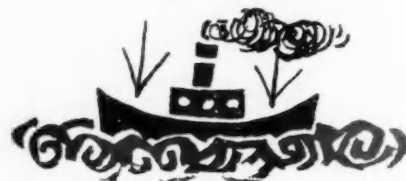
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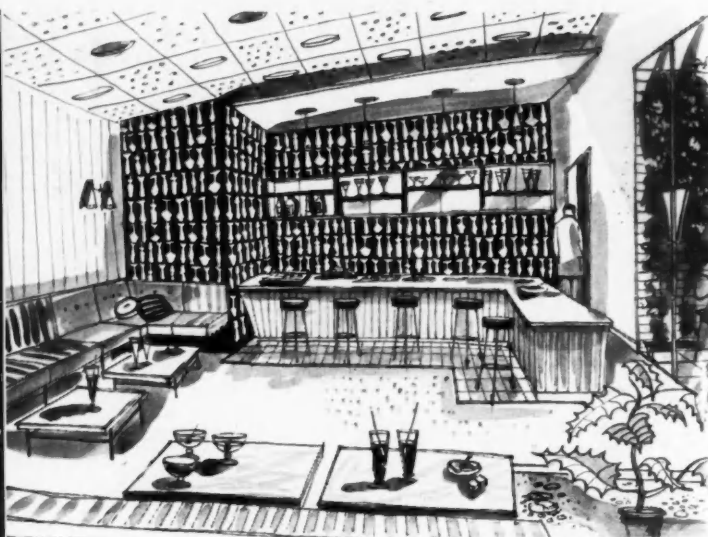
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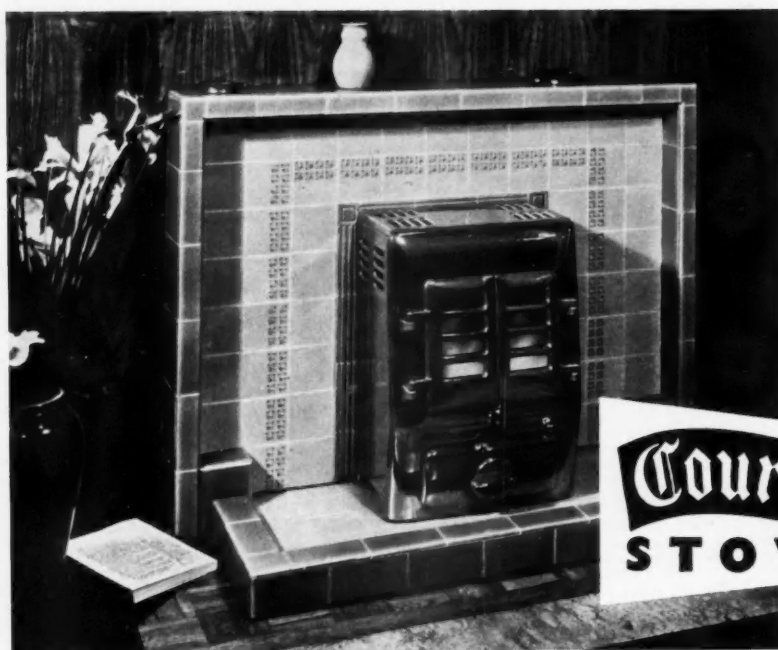
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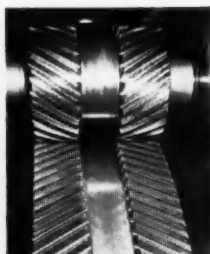


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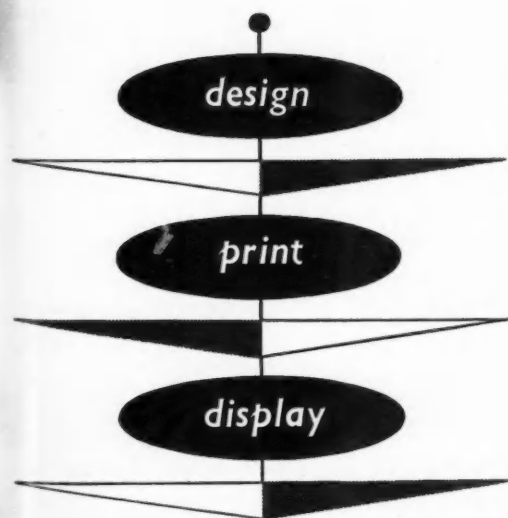
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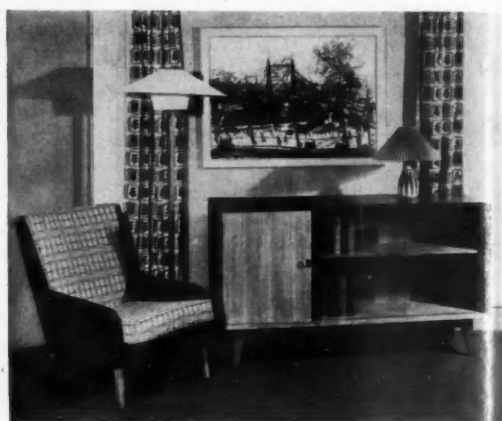
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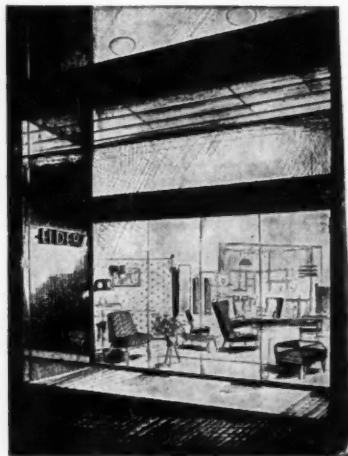
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DESIGN is published for the Council of Industrial Design, 28 Haymarket, London SW1 (Scottish Committee: 95 Bothwell Street, Glasgow G2) by Her Majesty's Stationery Office, and printed in Great Britain by Balding & Mansell, London and Wisbech
K80 SO Code No. 88-1266-12-55*

